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INDIA CALLED THEM





*Henry and Annette in March 1875*

LORD BEVERIDGE

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INDIA  
CALLED  
THEM

LONDON  
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WOKING

To  
JANET

*who did so much to make possible  
the care of my parents  
in their last years*



## Illustrations and Insertions

<i>Henry and Annette in March 1875</i>	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	<i>Facing page</i>
<i>The House of B</i>	16
<i>David Beveridge of Dunfermline</i>	22
<i>Margaret Beveridge</i>	22
<i>Jeanie at 17</i>	54
<i>Jeanie's Indian Home</i>	55
<i>William Akroyd of Stourbridge</i>	86
<i>Annette Akroyd at 22</i>	87
<i>Miss Akroyd's School in March 1875</i>	118
<i>Henry at about 35</i>	150
<i>Henry and Annette's Indian Establishments</i>	182
<i>Judge's House at Bankipur</i>	214
<i>Trio at Southport in 1885</i>	246
<i>Jemima at 88</i>	278
<i>Herman Beveridge in July 1890</i>	310
<i>Pitfold, Hindhead, as rebuilt by Annette</i>	342
<i>Henry at 76</i>	between 374-375
<i>Annette at 70</i>	" " "

## *India Called Them*

bring up a family in India and Britain; to study and argue and write together for more than fifty years, till they died in the same year in my care, for I am their elder and only surviving son.

For several reasons it has seemed worth while to give in this volume an account of these two people. They were both so well worth knowing that I should like them to be known to many. Their story is a love story, beginning late and lasting for more than fifty years; it shows the mutual adjustment by love of two high and vehement natures, to use a phrase which my father in one of his admonitions addressed to my mother about herself but which applies equally to him. Their story illustrates an outstanding episode in the history of the British race—our adventure in India. It illustrates that adventure in its consequences for the happiness and the personal relationships of those who took part. It shows the spending of the best of the lives and energies of some of the best of our young men and their wives and families, in a land which always remained strange to them, for a purpose which has not been accomplished.

I am able to give this account for the most part, not in my own words but in the words which these two used themselves, in intimate letters to one another, or to relations in Britain. The conditions of Indian life for European families meant that my father and mother were often separated, even when they were both in India. On practically every day of separation they wrote to one another, often more than one letter, and with few exceptions these letters were kept by the recipient and came on to me. From these letters, from my mother's diaries kept continuously for more than sixty years, and from other writings of theirs, it is possible to get a picture of what the British adventure in India meant in the personal lives of those who undertook it, which seems well worth placing on record now that the adventure is nearing its close.

In using these letters I have sometimes altered the order and I have perforce made many omissions, for both my father and mother poured themselves out to one another profusely. What is printed here is a small selection; I wish that I could have printed more. But I have concealed nothing of substance that could throw light on these two characters; they were people whose every action and word and thought could stand the light.

## *Prologue*

And I have added nothing which was not fact. No character, letter or speech in this volume is fictitious.

In the letters of Henry Beveridge of the Bengal Civil Service and of Annette Susannah his wife, the Indian scene of fifty to seventy years ago is faithfully recorded, for both had the gift of expression. And both in the words of Shelley's Preface to *Alastor* had minds enriched "by familiarity with all that is excellent and majestic" in the literature of many lands. To them books were a substantial world, more substantial than books ever were to Wordsworth, as real and as close to them as anything except their children and their parents.

From both his parents Henry derived a passion for reading, which never left him and never weakened. His retentive memory became stored with notable thoughts and sayings in many languages, but it was never a mere storehouse. What he had read was always at his command in speech and writing and became part of his idiom. When he wrote to the Government of India to protest against his being passed over for promotion to the High Court, he regaled the Government with a quotation from Matthew Arnold's Essay on Wordsworth, and compared the Privy Council to the Amphictyonic Council of ancient Greece. When as a suitor not yet accepted he wrote to his lady-love pleading his case, he filled eight pages out of nineteen with a discussion of John Stuart Mill and the relations of that worthy to Mrs. Taylor. When he suffered from toothache and proudly got relief by having the tooth out "without anaesthetics and without howling," he recalled Socrates' pleasure on his last day of life in being set free from chains. In all this there was not a trace of pedantry. Henry in his private letters written for no purpose save to pour out his mind was as naturally allusive as Milton by art is allusive in his poetry.

My mother was a reader before she met Henry, but learned from him to read still more. Always these two saw one another and the practical world against a background of books.

But for both of them books were only part of their world. With a passion for reading, they combined a love of nature, above all in rivers, trees and gardens, and a lively interest in their fellow-men; they were gossips both. The young Lady of Bankipur who risked losing her bookish swain because she did not know who was the Lily Maid of Astolat; the gastronome Collector of



*Carlyle says that the most important thing about a man is his religion. . . . It seems to me that it would be truer to say that the most important thing about an individual man is the character of his parents, and about a people, the race to which it belongs. Certainly, I do not think, in looking at the Bakarganj people, that the most important thing about the majority of them is whether they are Hindus or Mahomedans. They were Bengalis before they were Hindus or Mahomedans. . . .*

Henry Beveridge in *The District of Bakarganj; Its History and Statistics*, pp. 211-12 (1876).

*It is not always, nor perhaps even often, that marriage is the decisive act of a man's life. His choice of a profession is generally much the more important and draws the marriage and many other consequences after it.*

Henry Beveridge in article on "Jean Jacques Rousseau" (*Calcutta Review*, October 1878)

## Chapter I

### THE NOBLE HOUSE OF B

**I**N the last decade of the eighteenth century a young man called David Beveridge set up for himself as baker in the ancient city of Dunfermline, once the capital of Scotland, and still the chief town of the kingdom of Fife. He came of a family long established there, but he himself had been born elsewhere. His father, marrying a stranger from Irvine in Ayrshire, had settled among her people. But this father died there when all his children were young. David, at the age of 14, was brought back to Dunfermline to be started in life by his uncles.

They were well fitted to do this, for the Beveridges of Dunfermline 150 years ago were vigorous people, with a strong sense of duty to themselves and their family. In the early years of the nineteenth century, one set of David's relations established a stranglehold on the municipal life of their native city, which according to their defeated opponents they used with great freedom to see that favours went to the deserving. In giving evidence to a Select Committee of the House of Commons which in 1819 examined the work of the Royal Burghs of Scotland, one member of the resistance movement to the Beveridges declared that these Beveridges had directed the city council for many years. "Since 1808 there have been 23 guild councillors in the council consisting of the provost (uncle to the Beveridges) and seven of the Beveridges and their relations, two half-pay officers who have no property in the borough, a collector of taxes, the accountant of the Bank of Scotland of which the provost and the chamberlain (one of the seven Beveridges) are the agents at Dunfermline, the chamberlain's own clerk, the inn-keeper in whose house the council have their entertainments, Mr. Bogie the brother-in-law of Bailie Meldrum who is related to the provost, a distributor of stamps and some others." The Beveridges left nothing to chance. A meeting of the Dunfermline Council must have been like a Christmas family party—with presents all round.

The Beveridge grip on Dunfermline was very useful to young David in giving him a start. But he owed even more to his own

### *India Called Them*

by one of his apprehensive brothers as the ending of David's filial submission. This second David, though he died young, before reaching 50, left six children of whom three went to Canada and one to New Zealand to establish families there. Another son was the Erskine already mentioned who, overcoming early difficulties, made a great fortune by manufacturing linen. Before he was 40, he had passed from being "Mr." like his baker father to being Erskine Beveridge, Esq., of Priory Lane, whose gardener won prizes for him at local shows. Yet another son—Robert—beginning life in banking service, had an interlude of business ventures which ended in a crash, but in the end re-established himself successfully in banking in London. He was the kindest as well as the youngest of David and Margaret's children. When his father at 65 grew too old himself to do the heavy work of baking, it was Robert who took the lead in persuading old David to retire and in arranging for the four surviving sons jointly to make up their parents' income to £80 a year. David and Margaret had kept themselves and spent on their children, but had made no wealth.

The remaining child of David and Margaret Beveridge has been left to the last here, because he calls for fuller description. He was Henry, father of the young Scot—also called Henry—who embarked by himself for India at Gravesend in September 1857, and who is one of the two chief characters in this story. This elder Henry, third in order of birth, was probably the cleverest of David and Margaret's six, though not the most successful. But he had a full share of family resilience in misfortune.

Like so many clever boys of families such as his in Scotland, Henry the elder was designed by his parents for the ministry. He was sent to the University of Edinburgh and passed through it with great success. He became a licentiate of the Church of Scotland and a preacher whose discourses, according to his obituary notice, were distinguished for felicitous arrangement, logical power, and argumentative fervour. His declared profession was still that of preacher of the gospel when, at the age of 29, he married Jemima Watt, nearly four years his senior; as his father had done, Henry went up the ladder of age, not down it, in choosing a wife.

Jemima came from the same lowland stock as Henry, but on

### *The Noble House of B*

both sides from families slightly higher in the social and economic scale than his. Her father's family—the Watts—had been the holders direct from the Crown of twenty acres of land at Bothkennar in Stirlingshire, with a family tomb in the church there. They were inordinately proud of this tiny strip of land, but it provided no means to idleness. It was rather a jumping-off ground for good opinion of themselves; it was an heirloom rather than an estate. Jemima's mother's family—the Shirreffs—without the heirloom were of the same type as the Watts. Both families produced from time to time or inter-married with successful doctors, comfortable clerics, merchants, underwriters, captains of East Indiamen; farther back among the Shirreffs was one who had been in succession a farmer, a brewer and an inn-keeper. Still farther back was a Shirreff glory comparable to the ancestral estate of the Watts—an ancestor who had been a wig-maker, a friend of Tobias Smollett and the reputed original of Strap in *Roderick Random*.

Jemima's own father, Alexander Watt, like Henry the elder, had been trained for the ministry, but developed conscientious scruples and became an excise-man. He died before Jemima was born. But an underwriter uncle who did not marry provided for the education of Alexander's children, and in due course made Jemima and her elder sister Jane into heiresses, with £8,000 each.

Henry the elder and Jemima, having married, set out to commemorate their parents in their children. The first four children, coming conveniently boy and girl, were named for their four grandparents, David Beveridge, Euphemia Shirreff, Margaret Thomson, Alexander Watt. With the fifth child a start was made on the next generation and Henry had his father's name. Presumably a sixth child, if a daughter, would have been Jemima, and, if a son, would have been James, a standard name for Watt boys; Jemima herself had been christened under her mother's mistaken impression that Jemima is the feminine of James. But Jemima was already in her 42nd year when, in 1837, Henry was born; and he was the last of her children.

Henry the elder, having married money, felt able, two or three years later, to blossom out as a landed proprietor, acquiring in the western end of Fife a small wooded estate and house, with the charming name of Inzievar. Here his two youngest children

### *India Called Them*

will rise up, and concur, with unanimous consent, in sending you—Whither?—To Parliament? Oh! no, Sir, no! Not to Parliament—only to Coventry.

I am

Sir

Your most obedient humble servant  
Henry Beveridge.

Inzievar, 2nd April 1847

Alexander Alison replied to this in kind. While protesting that he would not soil his pen with vulgar abuse such as that of Henry, he proceeded to asperse Henry's motives and common honesty. He suggested that Henry's objection to the merger arose from desire to supply ore himself from his own land. It was a pretty squabble with honours in mud-slinging fairly divided.

Undoubtedly Henry was engaged at the time in seeking for minerals on his estate. He sunk more of Jemima's and Jane's fortune in boring. He persuaded his younger brother Robert to join him in this ill-starred venture. It may safely be said that for business of this kind Henry of Inzievar was as well suited as Colonel Newcome.

And in the depression of trade which followed the railway boom of 1846, he came to the same end as Colonel Newcome. In the spring of 1848 Henry the elder and Robert followed their brother John's example and became bankrupt together. So far as can be judged, the main blame for this rested on Henry. He had been embarrassed already when Robert joined him and the latter found himself paying Henry's private debts as well as his business ones. But Robert bore no malice; he was in theory and practice the most Christian of the brothers. And he had an experience and value in banking which always made him sure of a job; his brother Henry was in a different case.

For Henry the elder and Jemima, after twenty years of marriage, the days of landed grandeur ended. There was a distraint on the household goods; the boys were removed from school; Jemima gave up curling her hair; the beautiful Inzievar home was lost. To Henry the younger, then 11 years old, insolvency remained in his consciousness as one of the normal inconveniences of life, always waiting round the corner.

But being only 11 years old he had also a pleasanter recol-

### *The Noble House of B*

lection of the crisis. The immediate problem of the outstanding bills was solved by a sacrifice of capital—both of Jemima and of her sister Jane. But the sacrifice did not come easily. At first Jemima and Jane made difficulties about signing the bonds presented to them, so Henry jumped on a boat for Hamburg—whether to suggest that Scotland was no longer safe for him or for some other reason, is not clear. To Hamburg, Jemima, with brother-in-law Robert, pursued him, and there was a “reconciliation,” which meant that Jemima and Jane surrendered and agreed to sign away their gear. The party returned from Hamburg bringing with them peace with loss of inheritance at manhood for the eldest son, and exciting presents for the younger children. Henry the younger never forgot the toy German stove which fell to his lot and rejoiced him on this occasion. The financial structure of the noble House of B had been undermined rather than strengthened by Henry’s recourse to business. It had to be restored and was restored by exploiting not material possessions, but the brains of its members.

Henry the elder in adversity showed his mettle and, as his son said, recovered nobly. At the age of 50 he turned from studying and writing for pleasure to writing to order. The family, extruded from the paradise of Inzievar, wandered with him in pursuit of writing occupation. The first year after the crash saw them in lodgings at Galashiels and Duddingston; then a connection with the publishing firm of Blackie & Sons kept them for six years in Glasgow and something like a home was re-established. But this was given up for an expedition to Belfast, whither the whole family migrated in 1856, so that the father might edit the *Banner of Ulster*, a Presbyterian paper which twice or thrice a week from 1842 to 1870, in defiance of the generally Arian opinion of Northern Ireland, maintained the strict principles of the Great Disruption. This editorship lasted only a year. Henry the elder returned to complete, largely in a succession of lodgings in London—Hampstead, Haverstock Hill, Richmond, South Norwood, Holborn—while he worked at the British Museum, his last and longest work for Blackie’s. There followed two years of failing health in a furnished house in Helensburgh. Then Henry the elder returned to die in Aunt Jane’s house at Culross, worn out at the age of 63.

### *India Called Them*

Henry the younger once described his father as becoming a bookseller's hack for the sake of the family. This is perhaps an unduly harsh expression for the long and friendly connection with Blackie's, on which the family bread and butter depended. It is true that Henry the elder did much hack work for that firm. He wrote a large part, according to his son David as much as half, of the *Imperial Gazetteer* which Blackie's issued in 1855. According to the same authority, he was paid for this at the rate of 1s. for 104 words or 15s. for a page of 1,560 words; as the original edition ran to 2,600 pages, Henry the elder must have written some two million words of highly varied information in the *Gazetteer* and must have earned nearly £1,000. The *Gazetteer*, no doubt, was his main occupation for several years, though he varied it by making translations. One of the works attributed to him in the Dunfermline Bibliography prepared by his nephew Erskine, making an odd mixture there with Calvin, Pascal, the *History of India* and the East of Scotland Malleable Iron Company, is a translation from French of a work of veterinary science: *How to Choose a Good Milk Cow*; this work does not bear Henry's name but has many excellent engravings of French cows. No doubt Henry the elder did other hack work of this nature. But Blackie & Sons also made it possible for him to undertake under his own name a task more to his taste, in writing a three-volume *Comprehensive History of India*, from the earliest times to the end of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. The first numbers of this began to appear in 1858, when India was much in the news and when the two younger sons of the family were already in that country. Henry the elder, according to his son David, planned this work as his *chef d'œuvre* and, though now superseded, it was the first of its kind. Whether or not it rewarded the publishers, it provided an indispensable income for Henry the elder, more pleasantly than the *Imperial Gazetteer* or the *Milk Cows* had done.

The *Imperial Gazetteer* did more than provide an income. It anchored the family to Glasgow for six years, and thus made possible their one good investment. Henry the elder and Jemima, whatever their troubles, had no thought of denying education to their sons. Jemima wanted to send young Henry to Oxford, but this was ruled out; there was no scholarship ladder in the







### *The Noble House of B*

eighteen-fifties. The six-year sojourn in Glasgow, however, did make possible both for Henry and for his next elder brother, Allie, full University courses on the spot. Allie took medicine; Henry took arts and science and a large assortment of prizes. He finished his formal education, not at Glasgow, but at Queen's College, Belfast, where, during his father's editorship of the *Banner of Ulster*, he entered in 1856-57 as a non-matriculated student.

At that moment the East India Company was still in power in India but, just before, in 1855, entry to its service had been thrown open, with a competitive examination conducted by the Civil Service Commission, in place of its being recruited by Directors' nominees through Haileybury. The lure of the door that could be opened without influence might by itself have caught Henry, as it caught so many clever boys in the years that followed. But he had two special reasons also for looking to India. Jemima's dearest friend, Mrs. Howison, was married to a member of the East India Company's medical service. Henry the elder was already absorbed in his *Comprehensive History*: talk at home turned continually to the East.

So in July 1857 Henry, from Queen's College, Belfast, entered for the third of the new examinations. He came out top of the list. In the same year, at the age of 22, his brother Allie qualified as a doctor and entering the Army Medical Service was gazetted to the 78th Highlanders under orders for India.

The education of these two younger sons proved the best investment ever made by Henry the elder. At 22 and 20 each of them was established in a career. Each proceeded to India; each at once began to send remittances home, and continued to do so as long as there was need. The financial structure of the poor branch of the House of B was securely underpinned by its junior members.

*The upbringing of all the members of our family was among books. . . . My father was literary all over . . . whilst our mother had equally a passion for books. . . . We saw almost no society.*

David Beveridge, eldest brother of Henry, in  
Memoir prefixed to his sister Maggie's Poems.  
(Printed privately, 1894.)

*I see I am too apt to become my own centre.*

Henry of Inzievar to his brother Robert,  
July 28, 1827.

*I wish I could act as I write, but I sadly fail at times.*

Jemima Beveridge to her daughter Maggie  
about 1855.

*Man requires no help in finding out the imperfections of his mate.*

Jemima to her daughter Maggie about 1855.

*After the name bankrupt became mine I ceased to curl my hair. This is a confession I never made except to your never to be forgotten aunt.*

Jemima to her son Henry in India,  
December 17, 1874.

## Chapter II

### JEMIMA AND HER BROOD

**I**N writing to his wife, Henry the younger once spoke of the "flea-in-the-blanket" strain in the Beveridge family and rejoiced that his children, through their mother, would inherit something to steady them. "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel" appears to have been a favourite admonishment for the women born or brought into this family to address to their men. It was used to Henry by his sister Maggie, though the justification for this charge is not apparent in his life. It was used by Henry's wife, Annette, to their son William when he announced his intention of giving up the bar for philanthropy and the study of social conditions at Toynbee Hall. It was certainly used at one time or another by Henry's mother, Jemima, to his father, for Jemima combined a sharp tongue with extensive knowledge of the scriptures.

That Henry the elder had something in him of the flea-in-the-blanket is hard to deny: with his changes of profession, with his moving of homes, with his excursions to Hamburg and Belfast. He had also a full share of his father's choler. And he had the scholar's common concentration on himself. "I see I am too apt to become my own centre," he wrote once to his brother Robert, after giving a long account of troublesome affairs.

But this admission itself showed his saving quality of self-criticism. And misfortune showed his strength. He turned himself resolutely after the crash to making an income for his family. And he did so by sticking as near as he could to his true vocation—the life of books and thought and expression.

He had found in Jemima an equal partner. She had a nimble wit and a passion for reading equal to his own and perhaps more catholic. The nimbleness of her wit is illustrated by the account which, more than seventy years after the event, her son David, writing to Henry, gave of a visit paid by Jemima as a young woman to Robert Owen's New Lanark. The Jeanie Watkins of this expedition, becoming Mrs. Howison and Jemima's life-long

### *India Called Them*

crony, played later an important part in the marriages of at least two of *Jemima's* children.

216 Liverpool Road,  
Islington 29 July 1897.

I would have liked if you had made out your excursion to the Owen phalanstery at the New Lanark with which I always associate our mother's name. I have heard her repeatedly speak of the excursion she with the Dawsons, Mrs. Howison (then *Jeanie Watkins*) and *Helen Ramage* then the fiancée of Provost Dawson made in a cart from Linlithgow to see the Falls of Clyde. . . . With what simplicity our forebears travelled, contrasted with the luxury of the present day! The party went in a cart doubtless lined with straw and provided with one or it might be two sacks and a bed cover laid across. *William Dawson* (who however does not seem to have made one of the party) was out the night before in the garden gathering gooseberries by the light of a lantern for the excursionists to take with them. Sometimes one or two of the party would get down to ease the horse . . . Arrived at Lanark the party under the escort of the Provost who had a letter of introduction to Mr. Owen paid the latter a visit, were received with the greatest politeness and conducted personally over his establishment, it being remarked, however, that his attentions were more especially directed to the pretty *Miss Ramage*. "Ah!" he exclaimed in dilating with enthusiasm on all the good work he had accomplished by his philanthropic efforts, "we have completely banished vice from this factory. See here how"—and he pointed to a little garden in the centre court—"not a single gooseberry has been touched." "Well, but Mr. Owen," interposed *Miss Jemima Watt*, "consider what a guardianship there is of them in the eyes from the surrounding windows." And the remark was doubtless correct, for slanderers asserted that not a kailyard in the vicinity was exempt from depredations.

*Jemima*, like most women, though with more justification than some, had an amused contempt for the slower mental processes of the male. Commenting on the portraits of her parents-in-law, *David and Margaret Beveridge*, which had been commissioned by rich *Erskine* and in which by common consent the painter had succeeded with *David* and failed with *Margaret*, she wrote to her favourite brother-in-law *Robert*:

16/3/1830.

It would seem as if woman were as difficult to hit on canvas as she is in society, for few except the great Masters have succeeded in

## *Jemima and Her Brood*

expressing those shifting hues that mouning to woman's brow reveal to the gifted observer at one glance all that her soul delights in—hates abhors or meditates upon, while the veriest blockhead in the school of art can shadow forth the substantial lines of thought in the mechanical animal man whose turnings of mind are like the movements of the crocodile.

Jemima's nimble wit she had in her from the beginning; as her letters show it stayed with her to the end. How she acquired her passion for books in many languages is not so clear. She did not owe it to her father, for he died before she was born. She did not owe it to her husband, for she was reading Homer in Greek and translating for her amusement before she was married; Clarke's edition of the *Iliad* published in 1825, inscribed with her maiden name and containing many pages of her translation, descended in due course for use by her son Henry and her grandson William. But, though Jemima's father was dead, her mother had the sense to believe that a good education is a noble heritage "very easily carried about with us,"<sup>1</sup> and her underwriter uncle was there to ensure the means of going to schools of some distinction, first in Dunfermline and then in Edinburgh. The Dunfermline school was co-educational; it was kept by a Mr. Johnston who acquired literary reputation as editor of a collection of sacred poetry and of a magazine bearing his name, and whose wife, Christian Todd, was an accomplished authoress and for many years editress of the once famous *Tait's Magazine*. The Edinburgh school, kept by a Mrs. Major Robertson, in James Square, ranked at the time "as one of the first seminaries for young ladies in the metropolis." The young Jemima was given the best teaching then available for young ladies and she repaid her teachers by a passion for

<sup>1</sup> This phrase comes from a letter by Jemima to her sister-in-law, Elizabeth Adamson (Henry of Inzievar's eldest sister), written just after the latter, with her seven children, had emigrated from Fife to Australia:

You will, of course, for some time look across the world of waters as to your home, but when your sons begin to settle around you, your thoughts and feelings will gradually cluster round your own little circle, and the affairs of the old world will almost escape your memory. There is such a providential disposition in woman's mind to circumscribe her thoughts as well as her feelings within the walls of her own tenement. I was glad to hear your younger children were at school; a good education is a noble heritage, and as my honest mother used to tell us, "very easily carried about with us."

This letter has all the Jemima quality. It is printed in the *Letters of Adam Adamson*, edited by his daughters, B. and M. Adamson, published in 1901 in Melbourne. Adam Adamson was Elizabeth Adamson's eldest son and Jemima's nephew, became a well-known public figure in Melbourne and appeared for a moment in the story of Henry the younger.

## *India Called Them*

learning and for poetry in many languages. "My old worthies, Homer and Virgil," were her constant comfort.

To her two major passions—for her children and for books—Jemima added two tastes—for long walks and for cold baths—which equally mark her out as before her time, for it must be remembered that she was born in 1795.

3/6/65.

"I laid great injunctions on your mother about her long walks," wrote her daughter Maggie to her doctor brother Allie in India, "but she is incorrigible, and slips out surreptitiously with Charlie at her tail and wanders along the sea-cliffs for *miles*. The same with regard to her bath. I have been obliged to make Stephen let on the hot water into it before she comes to it of a morning so that she cannot cheat as she does in the remote laundry at Culross."

This was written when Jemima, aged 70, was staying with Maggie and Maggie's husband, Stephen Bell, in his manse at Eyemouth on the Berwickshire coast. But eight years later, as Maggie wrote to Henry, Jemima was still "going on with her horrible cold water baths" whenever she escaped from her children's care.

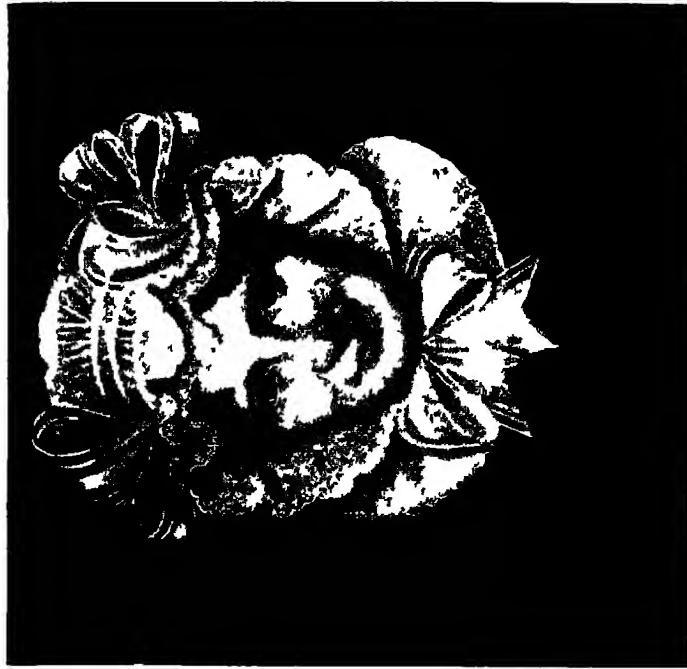
She had the true taste for country. "Bushey Park," she wrote once to Henry after a London visit, "was in all its glory, but trees with multitudes are not to my taste."

I remember once coming down the long pastoral valley of Habbie's How when a pleasure excursion had brought out hundreds of men and women and children for it seemed, an assembly of schools, and I thought the very grass seemed offended at being so trod upon and Logan Water ran scolding past the tables and benches set up for the multitude. This is not a wholesome feeling but I own its power and really feel in a crowd as if I were in a tropical sun.

Jemima liked to have things exactly as she liked them. She was a self-willed and at times a fretful lady. In the days of her affluence before the crash, her wedding day was celebrated always by a particularly good dinner, but it was a capital offence for any child or visitor to refer in Mamma's presence to the event which was being commemorated by the dinner; "she had," says her son David, "an extraordinary prudery or shyness in alluding to such matters." In age her fretfulness naturally grew upon her:



*David Beveridge of Dunfermline*



*Margaret Beveridge*





### *Jemima and Her Brood*

on one occasion, taking a dislike to a youthful great-niece who was visiting her, she went on hunger strike until the poor child was removed. And her letters abound with pungent comments on her relations-in-law.

Jemima felt that she had begun life with a grievance because, like Dean Swift, she was a posthumous child and she often quoted Job's words as applicable to herself. It must be admitted that her later experience gave her better ground for fretfulness, in her passage from an affluent beautiful home to scraping in lodgings, with a husband who can never have been an easy companion, and whose health under overwork and anxiety was failing.

To her "Benjamin" Henry, Jemima once wrote:

But oh bairn, it is sad to feel that you can no longer be kind and hospitable. . . .

We are worried with Belfast letters about rent and furniture. I sometimes feel the bitterness of being thought a swindler. . . .

After the name bankrupt became mine I ceased to curl my hair. This is a confession I only made to your never to be forgotten aunt. Ah! that was a blinding blow to my pride. I knew I could bear poverty but to see ruthless folks carry off my household gear crushed every spark of self-complacency and pride of honesty.

To Aunt Jane herself in Henry the elder's last year of life and anxieties for work, she wrote:

My friend here is not altogether fit to be left alone, albeit is up early and late in his own room. Dr. Blackie's silence keeps him in a fever and you know when once the steam gets up there comes a fearful haste and hurry.

To her most understanding daughter, Maggie, Jemima wrote most frankly on this same theme:

Man requires no help in finding out the imperfections of his mate.

Or again:

There are minds which cannot be idle with safety to themselves or comfort to their neighbours.

Or again:

You or Phemie had better inquire after his health but allude to no *probable* cause save the weather, for at times there are certain under-

### *India Called Them*

currents heavily laden with sunken wrecks that set in upon his mind and cause much turmoil in the body, working amidst its complicated machinery like cabals in the Cabinet. Ergo, my bairns, it behoves us to treat these disturbances gently and seem not to know of their existence. I wish I could act as I write but I sadly fail at times.

But through all Jemima's troubles, her books, her humour and the love of her bairns sustained her. She was certainly justified in her children. One of the five was killed in a carriage accident in her 59th year; the other four lived to their 76th, 77th, 81st and 93rd years respectively. And when Jemima herself came to her end in her 90th year, four of the five children were round her; the fifth could not be there, because he was in India.

With Henry the elder and Jemima as parents, the nature of the children's upbringing was a foregone conclusion.

The upbringing of all the members of our family was among books and everyone of us was more or less characterised by the literary tendency. My father was literary all over, varied only by theological and political proclivities, whilst our mother had equally a passion for books, but was much more thoroughly imbued than her husband with the spirit of poetry and romance. The former was wont to disclaim all pretensions to the role of a votary of the muses and with the exception of the works of Milton and the political satires of Dryden he exhibited no enthusiasm for our poets with the lucubrations of most of whom, however, he was well acquainted. . . .

We saw almost no society and had scarcely any social intercourse except with a few intimate friends. Our chief amusement was walking exercise, in which, indeed, whether we would or not, we were most systematically drilled; whilst indoors our principal recreation was books, of which the house contained a plethora of all kinds, and it must be admitted that in the department of children's story books there was abundant store. So that there was little fear of any imaginative faculty that might exist amongst us youngsters being starved for want of nutriment. . . .

So wrote Jemima's eldest son David Beveridge in a Memoir prefixed to a privately printed volume of Poems by his sister Maggie.

The dominant influence in the formation of Henry's character was that of his parents. He declared that till manhood he owed little to any other teachers, whether in school or in university.

## *Jemima and Her Brood*

But he owed much also to his membership of a close knit family group of brothers and sisters. As they will come into the story, something must be said briefly about each of them.

The first-born David had been brought up in expectation of being able to be a scholar without troubling to earn his living. In youth he was strikingly handsome, as his family nickname of Apollo shows. He was like Apollo also in being a charioteer; how or when this simple Scottish youth acquired the art of driving a four-in-hand is hard to say, but he did acquire it and throughout his life seized every opportunity good and bad of handling the ribbons.<sup>1</sup>

The family crash hit David just as he was reaching manhood and he never established himself in any paying career. For a time Blackie & Sons found hack work for him as well as for his father, and he made Glasgow his centre. Of one of the works on which he had been engaged he wrote to Henry: "The Sheepfold has long since been finished and I hope I may never again have such a job given me." Undoubtedly *The Sheepfold and the Common, or Within and Without*, to give it its full title, would be regarded to-day as a singularly repulsive work. It was a re-hash of "Tales and Sketches illustrating the Power of Evangelical Religion" issued twenty years before by a well-known preacher, Timothy East, under the title of *The Evangelical Rambler*. It could only have found a market for reading on Sundays when everything else was barred. From it poor David turned with joy to more exciting tasks of making an Index to the *History of England* and compiling many articles in Chambers' *Book of Days*.

Henry from youth to age regarded David as his responsibility. He felt that David the eldest son, in losing an expected inheritance, had been the chief sufferer by the family crash. No sooner had Henry reached India than he began to explore the possibility of getting work for David there as well. "I should certainly have

<sup>1</sup> This taste sometimes caused embarrassment to his kinsfolk. On one of his visits to Culross from India, Henry told his wife how he got a shock at Alloa.

David was on the box and drove us to Kincardine. I crept inside and endeavoured to look as unconscious as possible. He got hold of the reins again on the way from Kincardine to Culross but I got out a mile or two from the town and walked.

When David went to stay, as he did often, with his rich and hospitable cousin, Erskine Beveridge the second, at Dunfermline, he loved to drive his cousin's barouche through the city streets. The sight of this familiar vehicle of their business prince under the charge of the stately white-bearded patriarch that David became produced a sensation among the townsfolk.

### *India Called Them*

no objection," David wrote to Henry in 1858, "to a professorial chair at Calcutta should such things be established there, but for the present must be contented to jog on at the old trot a little while longer. I shall, however, keep a sharp look out for any opening. I have nothing to complain of in the conduct of the Blackies except perhaps their delay in announcing an augmentation of screw, but the last winter has been a period of depression in all trades."

Though the chance did not come his way, David would have made a perfectly good professor. He was chock-full of learning and loved the sound of his voice; he was by nature an amiable, industrious book-worm and a voluminous author of the unsaleable. As his brother Henry said of one of his books, after one-third of the first draft had been cut out, there was still a lot of whey in it.

David was not only a born professor but also an admirable son. Left to himself he would have lived always within reach of the British Museum Reading Room, and of the varied sights of London. But for more than twenty years of Jemima's widowhood he lived with her at Culross, keeping her and his sister Phemie company, with only an occasional pilgrimage to the Bloomsbury Mecca. Some seven years after the letter about the Calcutta professorship, when at 37 the hope of an independent career was fading, he was writing to Henry from Culross that he felt "like another Mr. Micawber waiting for something to turn up." A classical Encyclopaedia projected by another publisher was being held up, but David was preparing himself for it in hope, by grinding away at the Classics, and was longing to go back to London. "I am sick\* of *unproductiveness*. I can scarcely call it *inaction* as I get up at 5 and work as hard as ever." A letter of Jemima's at this time confirms this early rising to work at the classics and paints a picture of how happy life would be if David could get some regular employment in writing by day, which would leave him free to read Greek plays to her in the evenings.

30/3/65

He read Hecuba to me the other night. What a sameness there is in human nature.

There were of course consolations in the Culross life. David's

### *Jemima and Her Brood*

two published works on *Culross and Tulliallan* and *Between the Ochils and the Forth* dealt with local history and topography. He was allowed pretty regularly to mount the box of the local stage coach. He devoted himself with success to ejecting a local minister who was clearly unfit for the job, but he was not equally triumphant in getting the vacancy for the brother of a friend. "Mamma" (she was then 86) "cannot walk far, but walked to church to vote for James Goldie who however lost the election. . . . The Culross people are a senseless ungrateful pack and one might have expected better wage at their hands after having rid them of an encumbrance."

While Jemima lived, there was a material reason of economy why her unemployed elder children, David and Phemie, should live with her. They made a joint household supported largely by the younger children, Henry and Allie. With Jemima's death David succeeded to the rents of her ancestral estate, and to a third of the £500 to which Jemima's fortune was sunk; he acquired another third also which his sister Maggie surrendered to him. He established himself in lodgings in London and, with Henry to help him at need, settled down to haunt the libraries and to produce an endless work on *The Scot in London*. After going the round of publishers the Scot never saw the light. No publisher would take him at publisher's risk and David was not prepared to sacrifice for him any part of the ancestral estate which, as he said, "stands between me and the deep sea."

But failure to publish did not destroy David's happiness. Counting his blessings of good health and good memory he remained to his last days in continuous cheerful correspondence with Henry, on obscure points of philology and history, and on family affairs modern and ancient. The oldest child of the noble house of B was like the youngest in being a bookworm, a gossip and a contented spirit, in spite of the material failure of his life. David, in solitary poverty in London, never lost zest for new experiences, whether of listening to a church service in Danish, or being the guest of an omnibus company on a picnic to Epping, or learning Anglo-Saxon, or walking many miles through London in the small hours to meet a niece at Tilbury. He retailed all the gossip of the family, in the present and from the remote past: as a brother older by seven years he was able to give Henry a

### *India Called Them*

convincing illustration of the identity of Roman Thule with the island of Foula: "You will hardly recollect (but I do) the days when you spoke of your 'Fumbs.'" He talked of writing a philosophic novel. Every now and again he got his old crony, Mrs. Goldie (she was the daughter of Jemima's crony, Mrs. Howison, and has much to do in Henry's story), to London and with her he went the pace of the London theatres. At other times he made expeditions to Fife, and renewed his youthful memories.

Only one new experience of Henry's did David at the age of 68 firmly reject for himself. "Eleven miles in an hour is certainly fast travelling, but I cannot interest myself in bicycling." David after all was master of an older and rarer art than bicycling. At the age of 66, after years spent as a British Museum bookworm, David found himself still able to handle a high-spirited team of four; from one of his expeditions to Fife he reported this achievement to Henry; he had been tooling a set of magnificent black steeds belonging to "no less a personage than Sir Arthur Halkett."

David refused to be unhappy though poor. He retained always spirit to laugh at "the peculiar miseries of the rich." The phrase is in a letter of David's commenting on the news that his prosperous brother Allie, having failed to get the country house he wanted for August shooting, was sitting in dudgeon in Edinburgh. "Were not the hotels in Scotland open to him?" asked David.

In truth, the chief sufferer from the crash was not David but the elder daughter Phemie. There was no real reason why the eldest son should not have earned his living like the younger sons; David, though he did not earn much of a living, had the kind of life that he enjoyed; he knew that Henry would never let him starve. But daughters of such families as Jemima's were not in those days prepared for paid careers or expected to take them. Phemie was not a generation removed in time and not at all in outlook from Jane Austen's Charlotte Lucas: "Marriage . . . was the only honourable provision for well educated young women of small fortune, and however uncertain of giving happiness, must be their pleasantest preservative from want." Phemie, in spite of her family nickname of "old fiddler," had looks and brains and accomplishments and would have made an entertaining wife for a clever husband; she had a gift of observation and a knack of

### *Jemima and Her Brood*

making remarks which hit the nail. She had also a satisfying love of animals. There is hardly a letter of hers that fails to mention some bird or beast that she was befriending or that was giving her pleasure; her family thought her like Emily Brontë.<sup>1</sup> But the crash made her the companion, first, of the gypsy life of both her parents and later of her widowed mother in a cramped remote cottage filled with relics of lost grandeur. As a result, Henry declared, she never even had an offer. He did his best for her, by taking her out for a summer and winter in India, but she was already 39 and, as he said, the change came too late to do her any good; no suitor came forward. It is small wonder that in middle life she became uncertain of temper. But her love of birds persisted, and in a cottage which she made into an aviary, she reached at last an old age which was self-contained and contented. Sadly, she was the one member of his family to whom at times Henry was a little hard; he was angered by her tempers and for a time ceased writing to her. But he never ceased to help her, or to think of her needs.

The third child, Maggie, was the only one who did not reach old age, being killed at 59 in a carriage accident. She was also the only one whose writing took a romantic turn, in verse and stories. Almost a real published authoress, she became in family parlance "the illustrious Miggs." After a lengthy courtship which kept the family agog for years she married at 30 a minister—Stephen Bell—whom she had got to know through her mother's crony, Mrs. Howison, and she lived twenty years with him at the small fishing town of Eyemouth on the Berwickshire coast. Stephen himself was there for nearly forty years; he achieved a remarkable double first of local fame, by being burnt in effigy in the streets early in his ministry, and by having a tablet in the church erected to his memory more than twenty years after his death. The burning in effigy arose from his stand for church rights to tithe from the fishermen; he was a small man, bold as a lion. The church tablet shows that he fought his unpopularity down both by years of service and by his sacrifice at their end. There was a great storm at Eyemouth in the autumn of 1881 which cost many boats and

<sup>1</sup> Phemie's feeling for animals was in truth more like Charlotte Brontë's affection than like Emily's passion, as portrayed by Mrs. Gaskell at the end of Chapter XII of her *Life of Charlotte Brontë*. The family comparison to Emily was provoked no doubt by Phemie's temper.



### *India Called Them*

lives and still in local tradition is known as "The Disaster." Stephen Bell wore himself to death in helping those who suffered by it. Maggie, to her grief, had no children. But this made it possible for her as a widow to return to Culross and become the mainstay of her mother's house there. While she lived at Eyemouth as the minister's helpmeet, the Manse there became a fixed point of family gathering. To her two younger brothers in India, Miggs became the grandmother to whom they looked in due course to provide them with wives. She remained always closest of all his kin to Henry, and came into the lives of his children.

The first of these younger brothers—Alexander, always shortened to Allie—went to India at the same time as Henry, though separately, as an Army doctor. Sent by the overland route across Egypt, Allie started for India a month later than Henry and arrived a month before. With the 78th Seaforth Highlanders, one of the famous regiments of the Mutiny War, he saw the fighting through, went home for two years and came out for a second spell in India. Thereafter Allie took part in Lord Napier of Magdala's Abyssinian Campaign of 1868 and returned to marry at the age of 38 one of his cousins, of the rich branch of the house of B from Dunfermline. This made it possible for him, after twenty years of service, to retire in the early forties into domesticity varied by shooting and fishing. Whether through his military service or the easy conditions of his marriage, he became in some ways the most conventional of the five children of Inzievar. He was the only one who ever indulged in field sports; he alone of all his family hardly ever dated the letters he wrote or kept those that he received; books took a second place with him to the country life. "Like you," he wrote to Henry, "I could not do without books if I was always town bound, but let me loose among the birds, beasts and plants and books take a secondary place at least till night creeps in." But he shared the charm which was so strong in Henry and he shared the family fondness for trenchant phrases.

"I am weary," he wrote home in 1865, "of enumerating the natural features of Morar having written six accounts of its geography, topography and diseases for the annual returns of the Batteries. A clump of trees in the midst of a howling desert with barren hills all

### *Jemima and Her Brood*

round gives the best idea of a hole soon to become one of the largest military stations in India."

There has to be mentioned last but not least, as an essential member of this family group, Jemima's elder sister Jane. Not marrying herself, Jane became the beloved standby aunt of Jemima's children, living with them as often as not, having a home for them always.

Henry, echoing his sister Maggie and exercising his fondness for teasing thoughts, wrote once to his wife that in taking Jemima rather than Jane, his father had married the wrong sister. This was a little hard on Jemima who was justified by her children if ever a woman was, and who might have retorted that perhaps she had married the wrong man. Apart from this and the fact that Jane was nearly ten years older than Henry of Inzievar, in practice by marrying Jemima he acquired Jane also.

When Jemima was incapacitated by the birth of a daughter, Henry felt it a grievance that Jane simultaneously went off to nurse an uncle who was sick to death. He described himself as left at Inzievar as "sole housekeeper discharging the duty miserably."

When schoolboy Allie cut his finger, Jemima asked Jane to come and dress it and promised to go easy with his studies meanwhile.

I will torment him no more with his Latin until he is better. Hen is far up above in his class; he will perhaps be better next year if spared, but he will not give his mind to the verb.

Aunt Jane, having been educated in England and having lived there a good deal, was regarded by this Scottish family as an authority on all matters of taste and society. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico*. To Aunt Jane Jemima appealed when in distressed agitation about fitting out her daughter Maggie for marriage, without having any money for blankets.

I have written Henry [to send money from India] and urged him with the motto "Fly let us a' to the wedding" but much I fear the money can't reach us in time. You have the better head than I have for such matters—pray exert it on this occasion and let us devise what is to be done. My own heart is disgusted with bridal presents since the winds swept through mine.

### *India Called Them*

To Aunt Jane the children appealed in distress. One of the earliest of the surviving letters—a schoolgirl effusion by Phemie written in the shadow of bankruptcy—carried a postscript initialled by the whole tribe.

P.S. We would like if you would come over. D. B., E. S. B., M. T. B., A. B., H. B.

By his prudent marriage, Henry the elder's children enjoyed both the bracing austerities and Latin of Jemima and the amiable graces and cossetting of Jane; they were "her Bairns" as well as Jemima's. Success as a maiden aunt comes easier than success as a mother. But Jane worked for her success and deserved it.

Aunt Jane, by a family arrangement, when the rest moved back to Edinburgh, became occupant of Inzievar and made it, while Inzievar lasted, a continuing holiday home. "When the family became scattered over the world," wrote David, "the only place of never failing rendezvous and welcome was our aunt's house, first at Inzievar, then at Carnock in the adjoining parish, and last of all at St. Mungo's Culross." Wherever she went she took with her an irremovable retainer, Jenny Wilson, and a brother who at one time had been off his head and under restraint. Released, he became the harmless oddity of Jane's home, known to all as "Nunky," with Henry the elder—of all people most inappropriate—appointed as *curator bonis* to look after Nunky's affairs after having made a mess of his own.

It was to Jane's last house at St. Mungo's, Culross, that Henry the elder and Jemima returned in 1862 after their wanderings in London and their sojourn in Helensburgh. There Henry and Jane and "Nunky," all three died in the following year; there Jemima lived for another twenty years and more.

Aunt Jane was so much one of Henry the elder's family that her fortune, no doubt by her free will, became involved in its misfortunes. Her £8,000 as well as Jemima's, or a large part of it, went with the wind. In her last years she was helped out by an annuity from a friend and she died leaving few material possessions. What she left in the hearts of those on whom she spent herself was put by Allie to his brother Henry.

15/4/63

Aunt has made a happy end of her kind and unselfish life. May all her bairns meet her again. I have lost a love I never can expect again.

### *Jemima and Her Brood*

This close family group made Henry's life for twenty years. As David wrote in his *Memoir* of Maggie: "Both our parents were devotedly attached to their children, and the whole tenor of our life was of the most domestic character." The noble house of B with its five children, its maiden aunt, and its books and walks was a self-contained world, as the smaller families of to-day with aunts becoming as rare as comets can hardly be. From this upbringing flowed Henry's qualities: bookishness, thoughtfulness for others, need to exercise affection, self-criticism, shyness with strangers, utter unreserve when he was sure. His shyness stayed with him through life, marked physically by an engaging blinking of his eyes, marked mentally by an abiding sense of uncouthness, shown sometimes as with other shy creatures by brusqueness of manner to cover the tenderness of his heart. Self-criticism he drew in full from father and mother alike. His father's changeability came down to him only in a fondness for throwing out unpractical ideas as to places in which to live or expeditions that he or others might make or books that he might write. His mother's fretfulness came down to him only as a fondness for teasing thoughts. Her love of gossip and of harmless malice in comment on her kind came down in full; Henry always said of himself that he looked habitually at "the other side of the stuff." One quality—of making the best of his circumstances and never crying over spilt milk—Henry himself used to attribute to his reading of Foster's *Essay on Decision of Character*,<sup>1</sup> but one may suspect that it had deeper roots in temperament, in good health, in the fact that books were to him a never-failing resource. The same quality was shown by his brother David. It was not in the nature of these two, any more than it was in the nature of Elizabeth Bennet, to increase their vexations by dwelling on them.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This was one of several *Essays in a Series of Letters to a Friend*, which between 1840 and 1855 ran to 27 editions. Of the author it was said that "As a Baptist Minister he was a pathetic failure in five brief pastorates, but as a writer he exercised an influence without parallel in Nonconformist annals"; the *Essay on Decision of Character* was described as having put iron into the blood of countless readers. Henry Beveridge came to treat this work as a moral pill of proved efficacy; his taking it up to read became to his family a sign that he felt his temper to be out of order.

<sup>2</sup> *Pride and Prejudice*, ch. xl.

*Write succinctly and in Latin biographical notices of the following personages, stating the date and place of birth of each: Theramenes, Polybius, Poseidonius, Arcesilaus, Parmenides, Eratosthenes.*

Question set to Candidates for the Indian Civil Service in 1858.

*. . . There are of course not many dancing ladies here but that only makes the task of those males who don't dance the easier.*

Henry from Dacca to his brother David,  
December 1866.

*I cannot say that want of religion has seriously saddened me. . . . Virtue and morality are independent of revealed religion.*

Henry in Memorandum on his Religious Opinions  
written by him for his children.

*There is nothing really venerable except what is true.*

Henry from Noakhali to his sister Phemie in  
Culross, February 22, 1867.

*The longer you stay in the country the more you will feel that at heart the natives fear and dislike us and that they look with suspicion on all our schemes even when they are really for their benefit. . . . Not all the bells in all our churches will ring out the darkness of the land nor ring in the common love of good. The bells that will do that have yet to be cast and the voices of their chimes will not be heard by us.*

Henry to Annette Akroyd, March 13, 1873.

## Chapter III

### TEN LONELY YEARS

**L** *A solitude effraye une ame de vingt ans.* Loneliness is frightening to the soul at 20 years of age. So in Molière's *Le Misanthrope* Célimène answers Alceste.

When Henry, at 20 years of age, stepped on board the sailing ship *Alfred* at Gravesend he was facing an affrighting change of life, from intimacy to loneliness. He had lived till that moment as one of a close family group all of whom saw one another nearly every day, hardly any of whom saw a stranger except on rare occasions. A visitor was a curiosity in the noble house of B. Henry now left his home to go by himself on a four months' journey to the other side of the world, and take up a responsible new job about which he had everything to learn. He had also to learn suddenly how to live with strangers.

The country to which he was going was not one to give comfort to his parents. In the months just preceding his departure, the columns of the daily papers were full of the Sepoy Mutiny and its horrors. Henry was going to Bengal; just before he departed, his parents might have learned from *The Times* that in the Bengal Presidency mutiny and murder were still rampant.

Except for his next elder brother, Allie, he did not see any one of his family for more than ten years. Some of them—his father and his Aunt Jane—he never saw again. One of them—the nearest to him in some ways, his favourite sister, Maggie—he saw again only after she had changed her state by marrying. The change for Henry at 20 was complete and final, to a life utterly different from anything for which he had been prepared. And he and his type were different from anything that India had known.

The days when Englishmen went to India to shake the pagoda tree and returned as wealthy nabobs had passed long before. But the days of the appointment of directors' nominees had only just ended. Henry's covenant of service was not with the Government of India, for that did not exist in 1857, but with the East India Company. Nearly all his seniors in the service—the men

### *India Called Them*

who were to determine his fate—were men reared in a different tradition from his own, owing their positions to personal selection. Henry was the product of Mr. Gladstone's new-fangled device for breaking down patronage in the public service at home and abroad—the device of written competitive examination in academic subjects, conducted by an impartial body of Civil Service Commissioners.

For the work that he was meant to do the device was not at first blush appropriate; the art of the written examination was in its infancy, and some of the first papers set were singularly bad. Here are two questions, on the Language, Literature and History of Greece, set by a Reverend Doctor Donaldson, whose real name must have been Dr. Casaubon, the husband of George Eliot's Dorothea Brooke, or Dr. Middleton, the father of Meredith's Clara.

I. An eminent Greek Author, not a native of Athens, arrived there for the first time in B.C. 367; state the circumstances of his life before and after this time, and mention the subjects of his principal works.

II. Write succinctly and in Latin biographical notices of the following personages, stating the date and place of birth of each: Theramenes, Polybius, Poseidonius, Arcesilaus, Parmenides, Eratosthenes. Give in English the dates and circumstances of the following events: the first and second battles of Mantinea; the peace of Antalcidas; the defeat of the Athenians in Egypt; the deaths of Cleon and Brasidas.<sup>1</sup>

Such questions were designed to discover not what the candidate could do but what he did not know. If a candidate happened to remember about Aristotle one of the least important facts about him—namely, the year in which he reached Athens—he might score 100 per cent on the first question; otherwise his score would be zero. If a candidate had spent his time learning about Greeks of no real importance and ignoring those who made Greek history, he might have written six Latin biographies about them and done very well on the second question.

<sup>1</sup> These particular questions were set in 1858, not in 1857. The papers for 1857 are not given in the Civil Service Commission Report from which the questions are taken, but the examination was of the same type.

## *Ten Lonely Years*

Fortunately for him, Henry had a first-class memory; he got good marks in Greek, though he did relatively much better in Modern Languages, in Natural Science and in Moral Science. He was no specialist. With characteristic self-depreciation he accepted a casual remark once made of him by his father that Henny-penny was bird-witted.

Fortunately for India, possession of a good memory did not exclude more important qualities. Whatever could be said of the memory tests of the early examinations, as means of selecting for home service clerks in the Circumlocution Office of Dickens or the Internal Navigation of Trollope, Henry's seniors in Bengal might reasonably doubt whether his success in passing them was any qualification for dealing with men and for the outdoor life of the Indian backwoods. Their own selection had been made on very different grounds, and the fact that the new plan was designed to correct errors arising under the old plan, only sharpened their prejudice against the new men, interlopers in the sacred college of sons and nephews.<sup>1</sup> The "competition wallahs" had to make their way and prove their merits to severely critical superiors. That they did so triumphantly is now well known. They went to India no longer to seek fortunes, but in a spirit of adventure and service. They went to India chosen for what was in themselves, not for their parents or uncles.

Of Henry's long journey out four things only are known. The journey lasted four months, from the end of September 1857 to the end of January 1858. He took, among other things, for reading on the voyage three quarto volumes of Hallam's *Middle Ages* and Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. He saw Tristan d'Acunha and ever after felt a proprietary interest in that island. He remembered, as the greatest hardship of the journey, that he never had anything but salt water in which to wash.

When he reached India, he found that his brother, Allie, had already arrived there. The two brothers met from time to time and had some adventures together, some of which came back to Henry's mind in the last days of his life, long after Allie's death. But they were pursuing different careers and their meetings

<sup>1</sup> This is the phrase used for the East India Company's Covenanted Service by Sir William Hunter, five years Henry's junior, who outstripped him altogether in the race (*The India of the Queen*, p. 28).



### *India Called Them*

in India were rare. Their main co-operation was in the financial support of the family at home.

Of Henry's daily life and occupation in his first ten years very little is known. He spent most of the first year in Calcutta, in the College which in those days gave new recruits their first vocational training on the spot—in the languages they would use, in the law they would apply, in the practical arts of riding and shooting that they would need. Henry officially went through College with flying colours, but according to his own account he failed to pass in Hindustani.

Henry's first appointment after his period of training was to Mymensing, east of the Brahmaputra, but he did not stay there or indeed anywhere else for any length of time in those ten years. He was constantly on the move: he was sent to Nadia, where he acquired considerable dislike of indigo-growers; to Sylhet, which later became part of Assam; to Manipur, to which in his own words he was deported from Sylhet; to the native State of Cooch Behar; to Bhutan, where as the sender of a telegram about a disaster in the spring of 1865, he got his name into the English papers; to Dacca in 1866, and finally in 1867 to Noakhali, in the tidal delta of the great rivers at the south-eastern corner of Bengal.

Of course Henry had some friends from the beginning in India—two in particular from Queen's College, Belfast, who went out with him in the same year. And of course he made new friends, for he was an engaging youth, tall and good-looking, with fair hair and blue eyes; he had a natural charm to overcome the seriousness of his upbringing and his social inheritance.

One friend who influenced him greatly he made through being sent to Orissa to complete his education in Hindustani. This was Wilfred Heeley, two years his senior, one of the first batch of all among the competition wallahs.

Another friend for life he made in a characteristic way. He was standing in a crowd one morning, when he was a newcomer, looking at a passing show. There was a very small unknown Indian boy standing near him struggling hopelessly to get a view. Henry hoisted him on to his shoulder, where he watched it all above the heads of the other spectators. This was the beginning of a life-long friendship. The little boy turned out to be Krishna Govinda Gupta, who became in due course the first Indian

## *Ten Lonely Years*

member of the Legislative Council, and one of the first Indians to receive a knighthood. There was no story which later Sir Krishna liked so much to tell as this one, or which Henry so persistently tried to keep untold.<sup>1</sup>

But, in spite of friends, these early years of Henry in India were vagrant years and years of solitude. Like Shelley's Alastor, with his spirit inflamed by familiarity with things excellent and majestic in literature and philosophy, he was a youth sent out into a wilderness. And, as to Alastor, so to Henry and his kind, the problem of female companionship must have presented itself acutely. For Henry's and Allie's first years in India fell into a transition time, between the early stage when few European women came to India and unions with women of the country were common, and the later stage of Anglo-Indian Society with its growing racial separation.

The brothers were together for a time in the native State of Cooch Behar, a place in which Henry would have liked to stay, for he found plenty to do in putting things right. Here Allie took the chance as elder brother of giving Henry much good advice, including the recommendation that Henry should get himself a wife. But Henry was not apparently impressed, and Allie gave up the attempt and handed both Henry and himself over to the wisdom of their "grandmother at Eyemouth."

For Henry the problem of society was intensified by special factors. One factor was his shyness; years after he quoted with sympathy Archbishop Whately's saying that "the pangs of shyness are such that if there was no other world than this, the kindest thing to do to a very shy young man would be to put a bullet through his head." Another factor was his outspoken sympathy with Indian aspirations and his uneasiness about British rule. Many years after he told his younger daughter how aloof this sometimes made him feel in Anglo-Indian Society; English ladies appeared to him often to be drawing their skirts away from him as he passed. No doubt some of them did so. The attitude of English society in India of the eighteen-sixties, as it was described by one of Henry's younger contemporaries, was one of patronage and superiority.

<sup>1</sup> The most probable setting for this story is Mymensing, Henry's first station (when he was 22) and young Gupta's first school (when he was 8).

### *India Called Them*

The old Haileybury tone still pervaded the Civil Service and the new class of competitioners to which I belonged and had their spurs to win were easily attracted into the prevailing current. Nor was there any deterrent from the Indian side; nothing could exceed the obsequious and cringing demeanour of the old class of Indians, especially those about the Law Courts, with whom we were mostly brought into immediate contact. It was in fact a demoralising environment into which we were thrown, and I am not ashamed to say that I succumbed to it.<sup>1</sup>

This was written by Henry Cotton, who reached India nearly ten years after Henry Beveridge and who in later years showed the same Indian sympathies. Henry Beveridge swam against the prevailing current all his life.

Yet a third factor was Henry's conscious ignorance of the lesser social arts. He had never been taught to dance. From Dacca he wrote to his brother David:

9/12/66.

We have had a very gay time in Dacca owing to the races coming off in it. Some of the races are very pretty affairs and it is curious to see how the natives flock to look at them. Of course one reason of this is that one of the largest zemindars here is a great man for racing and is very popular with his countrymen.

Then we have had cricket and dinner parties and no less than two balls. The first was given by the Bachelors of Dacca and the 2nd by the aforesaid Mussulman Zemindar. . . . There are of course not many dancing ladies here but that only makes the task of those males who don't dance the easier.

I shall be leaving this station shortly but I don't know as yet where I am going.

The last sentence is typical of the unsettled life of those years. Henry was too modest and too sensible and too much interested in his work to be acutely unhappy. But he lacked the natural basis of happiness. And he did not, like his brother Allie, have the companionship of a mess. He solaced himself in these early years, as he did when he was lonely again at the end of his Indian service, by playing the concertina. This was the only musical instrument to which he aspired. It was one which he never mastered.

Though the details of Henry's early life in India are lost, it is

<sup>1</sup> *Indian and Home Memories*, by Sir Henry Cotton, K.C.S.I., p. 66.

## *Ten Lonely Years*

clear that three important things happened to him: He became with his brother Allie the main financial support of his family at home. He ranked himself firmly with Indian aspirations for self-government. He broke with the religion in which he had been brought up.

The two younger sons of the noble house of B. were no sooner established in India than they began sending money home. As Jemima would have put it, the family was at this stage even more than usually low. While Henry was still at sea on his way out, money belonging to him, presumably an advance of salary, had to be used to pay his father's fare from Fife to London. The first sums from India reached his parents in the middle of 1858, when Henry the elder, in London lodgings with his wife Jemima and his daughter Phemie, was finishing his *History of India*, against time and in failing health. They were as welcome as the first rains in Bengal.

Jemima wrote characteristic blessings to her bairn: "Like all beggars I hope that you will live till I pay you." She bought a silk bonnet for 30s. in Regent Street. She paid her debts and declared her intention of once more curling her hair. Recording these rejoicings at home, Phemie added for her brothers in India a picture that must have pleased them:

"Papa and Mrs. B. are playing a game of chess. . . . I haven't seen them at that for many a long day."

While Henry the elder lived, he continued to make some income, and Allie and Henry were only called on for extras, such as fitting out their sister Maggie for her marriage. But with their father's death in 1863 a new chapter opened. Henry arranged to send through his Uncle Robert regular remittances to his widowed mother of £25 or £30 a month. He and Allie continued remittances, so long as Jemima lived.

In return, Jemima kept them informed about the various branches of the house of B. Each of her three brothers-in-law—David of Dumfries, Robert and Erskine—married twice and had two families; Jemima had much to say about them.

Your cousins at the Priory are champing the bit at their Stepper [stepmother] with right good will. Surely that expulsive power of a new affection is of a bewildering potency, for both Erskine and Robert

### *India Called Them*

seem absolutely dead to early feelings—the present *Prima Donnas* carry all before them in both families. . . . If I was a despot I would prohibit my subjects from second marriages where there was a family. . . .

I have got an invitation to Cousin A's marriage with one Miss B. As I have never met her I must forbear all speculation anent the girl. She goes to the same sectarian church as he does; now-a-days these are the means of match-making where all stand on the same platform. Granny Hunt used to say it was fully a better mode of introduction than a ballroom. It may be but I doubt if it be equally propitious for gaining knowledge of each others dispositions. . . .

Amelia Beveridge's intended is an Irish curate. His father is a gaoler at Carrickfergus. But if the youth has wisdom and worth what need Uncle Erskine grumble at that for; however he says that the poor curate is not a gentleman and cannot keep a wife.

Since Uncle Erskine, though he had by his abilities become wealthy, was himself the son of a baker in Dunfermline, his objection to the son of a gaoler seemed hardly well-founded. Luckily Amelia was a young woman of determination, duly married her curate, and lived very happily with him.

In telling Henry about the marriages of kinsmen at home, his brothers and sisters did not fail to give him good advice for himself. "It is hardly necessary," hoped David, "to warn you against the allurements of the accomplished Mrs. Hughes." "Don't be taken up with the soft blandishments of any of them white roses in Calcutta," warned Phemie; "remember the brighter ones growing up for you *at home* and take not to yourself a wife of the daughters of a strange land."

It was probably part of Jemima's prudence that she let these admonitions come to Henry from his own generation rather than from herself. She was content to deal with minor dangers. "Oh caution him against dinner parties," she wrote to Allie, "for they are a snare to health." "I am desired by your Father to warn you not to sacrifice health to preferment and I add for myself: remember of buying books there is no end." With this letter Jemima sent to her Benjamin one of her own favourite books, her own personal copy of Thomas á Kempis.

The second and most important development for Henry in these early years was that he came to feel that British rule of India

### *Ten Lonely Years*

was out of place, and that its main objective should be to prepare for its own extinction. In principle this was the view of many Liberals—Macaulay among others—even from the day when British India became formally part of the British Empire. It was a view which Henry inherited from his father:

Should the day ever come that India, in consequence of the development of her resources by British capital, and the enlightenment of her people by British philanthropy, shall again take rank among nations as an independent State, then it will be not too much to say that the extinction of our Indian Empire by such peaceful means sheds more lustre on the British name than all the other events recorded in its history.

With this passage from the conclusion of his father's last work—the *Comprehensive History of India*, published in 1862—Henry thirteen years later fortified himself in his own first work—the *District of Bakarganj*—in mooting the gradual abandonment of India. This passage Henry's son William cited in a letter to *The Times* in April 1946, on the morrow of the momentous announcement made by the Prime Minister of the day announcing the final decision to establish a constitution for independent India. There have always in Britain been forces consciously directed to that aim.

In principle Henry did not go beyond many others of his time. His special characteristic was that he believed in putting principles into practice. If urging any course in which he believed appeared likely to bring him into trouble with authority, he felt it all the more necessary to urge it. In later life he was fond of quoting as applying to himself the remark of the miller whose wife fell into the river and was drowned: "Seek her upstreams." Henry was contrary by nature, if there was anything to be lost by contrariness. He spent his life working upstream in India.

His belief that Britain should in due course abandon India did not mean that he was blind either to the achievements of British rule or to dangers of an immediate withdrawal. He made hosts of Indian friends and kept them throughout on terms of affection and mutual respect, and he acquired a deep knowledge of the history, languages, and culture of his adopted land. But he would have been the first to say that the Bengali character did not show

## *India Called Them*

at its best in the law courts and police courts where he saw most of it, listening day by day to so many lying witnesses and such interminable pleaders; he wrote once of looking forward to a time when the Bengali Babu would not always be sitting "like a nightmare on our souls."

Undoubtedly Henry felt that he would have been happier in India if he had not been there as an alien ruler: if he had gone there as a scholar or teacher or even as a missionary. Not that he could have gone as a missionary. The agnosticism which was another fruit of his ten lonely years in India forbade that. The first article which he published, in the *Theological Review* of October 1869, on "Christianity in India," was an outspoken criticism of projects for sending out more preaching missionaries. Yet at the same time Henry paid tribute to the virtues of the missionaries and their work:

We firmly believe that missionaries are mistaken when they imagine that they will ever convert the Hindoos, but none the less do we believe them to be honest and god-fearing men, who have indirectly done a great deal of good in India. . . . Nearly all of them are excellent linguists. . . . Above all, the missionaries are the only Europeans who come to India for other purposes than to make a fortune or to earn a livelihood.

Discussion of missionaries leads naturally to the third thing which happened to Henry in those years, namely, his change of attitude to religion. Henry was born and bred a Presbyterian. His father, though becoming in some ways of doubtful orthodoxy and ceasing to preach, never left the church. His mother, as Henry once said of her, never abandoned the blessed hope of eternal damnation for unbelievers. And Henry himself, though looking back without pleasure to the dreary Sundays and wearisome services of his childhood, remained orthodox when he arrived in India; he was shocked when his new friend, Wilfred Heeley, laughed at the story of the apple in the Garden of Eden. But in a few years he went over completely. He became an agnostic, not denying religion, but denying his own capacity to know whether there was a God or a future life. And he took his agnosticism seriously, declined to do or say anything that would rank him as a Christian, declined to go to church to be married,

## *Ten Lonely Years*

declined in due course to have his children brought up as Christians or as members of any church. They were to choose for themselves when they should be old enough to do so. Characteristically he wrote out for the benefit of these children a memorandum telling them what he thought and how he had come to think it.

I cannot say that the want of a religion has seriously saddened me. I should like to believe in a future state where one could have another chance so to speak and especially where one could make up for the neglects and cruelties that one has committed in this world but at the same time I see that the idea of a future life brings with it many awkwardnesses. . . .

Virtue and morality are independent of revealed religion at least of such revelations as we have hitherto had. The great thing is to be just and fear not, to use John Bright's favourite phrase. A love of truth in thought word and deed is looked upon by your mother and myself as the main quality to be desired. Such a quality is in itself a religion. The ancient Stoics are a class we have a high veneration for. I hope that you will read Marcus Aurelius' meditations some day and some words on the Stoics in Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws.

If morality means respect for the claims of others than oneself, Henry undoubtedly showed in his own life that morality does not depend on religion. His reason for desiring a future life, not so as to have a better time for himself, but so as to make good his own neglects and cruelties, rings true and his whole life showed it to be true. In the memorandum Henry attributed his loss of belief largely to Wilfred Heeley and to his reading. In an article written nearer to the event he gave a different reason—the spectacle in India “of so many millions of men living without the knowledge of Christianity and apparently not much the worse for want of it.”

We found them eating and drinking and yet not gluttonous or wine-bibbing, marrying and giving in marriage, rearing their children, affectionate one towards another, cultivating the soil, practising their trades, observant of the laws, charitable to the poor etc., and yet entirely without the possession of what we had been told was the one thing needful. Naturally, we think, we came to the conclusion that Christianity was less important than we had been told it was, and that it was possible to stand up and live without it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Calcutta Review*, April, 1876 in a review of *Pilgrim Memories*.



### *India Called Them*

The decisive influence in Henry's break with Christianity was his sympathetic interest in the life of India.

Agnosticism did not mean that Henry ceased to be interested in religion, still less that he gave up reading sermons or the Bible. A letter which at 30 he wrote to his sister Phemie from Noakhali may fitly end this chapter, as it came near the end of his ten lonely years in India:

Daklin Shabagpur,  
Noakhali,  
22nd February, 1867.

My Dear Phemie,

I am still cruising among the islands in the estuary of the Meghna and passing my time in reading and writing. Among other readings I have been studying the Pentateuch and have got through the first three books. I must candidly confess that I incline to be an adherent of Bishop Colenso and that I cannot see that inspiration was required for all those minute details about the tabernacle and the duties of the Levites &c. I think too that the books gain in interest by being considered as merely very old historical records of the Jewish race.

Can anything be finer than the character of Moses as therein shown to us? Here was a man brought up in the lap of luxury and who might if he had chosen have trodden the primrose path of dalliance and yet he gave it all up and cast in his lot with a despised body of slaves merely because he felt it his duty to do so. He is perhaps the earliest hero in the World's history and he is one of the greatest. I confess that in old days when we learned our Shorter Catechism and I stuck at the answer to the question about effectual calling (I am afraid I don't know the answer very well yet) I used to think it hard that Moses was not allowed to enter the Promised Land after he had so long borne the burden and heat of the day. But I daresay it mattered little. He was a man who cared little for his own happiness and the thought that he had secured the Promised Land for his countrymen was enough for him.

Why does not the Government or the Kirk of Scotland or somebody else make a new translation of the Bible? It is all very well to say that the present translation is a very good one. No doubt it is for the time at which it was made and it has been hallowed by many associations. But still after all there is nothing that is really venerable except what is true and if the authorised translation is, as it undoubtedly is, incorrect in some places and unintelligible in others it ought to be revised.

## *Ten Lonely Years*

We publish new editions every day of Chaucer, Shakespeare &c., and despite the abuse poured upon commentators we feel the benefit of their labours when we come to a passage which we cannot understand. Why shouldn't we in the same way publish new editions of the Bible? I am sure that there are many passages in the Old Testament especially which are simply unintelligible in the present translation and which mar the effect of the finest chapters. Indeed I do not suppose that anyone ever read the Psalms or the Proverbs or the Prophets without a latent fear that he would stumble upon some passage to which he could not attach any meaning.

In old times and perhaps even yet Scotch folk had a great preference for the Old Testament and it was much more in their mouths than the New. I suppose the precision of its commands had an attraction for the hard-headed, logical Scotch mind which never admires anything that it cannot see round as it were. Anything clear and definite is only another word for limited.

This devotion to the Old Testament did harm enough in old days. For example the saying "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" caused many murders and Lily Adie's among the rest. I think it does harm still but I am afraid Mama will think that I have been treading too long on delicate ground and so I will now leave the subject. I will only remark though that if religion is to consist of the same set of views for all ages and if future generations are to have all their beliefs cut and dry for them before they enter into the world then I do not see what merit they have in embracing the true faith. A celebrated German (Lessing) said that if Heaven were to offer him two gifts one The Truth and the other The Search after Truth, he would choose the latter. *Don't you think he was right?*

Among these islands I have seen once more the phaenomenon of the tides to which I have long been a stranger. Seeing the "saut-water" and its ebb and flow reminds one of the old days at Becky Hog's and the Island. But what a wee bit burnie your Forth is to our great rivers and the Carse, too, what a little spit it is compared to the alluvial formations here.

From Noakhali in February 1868 Henry went home to see once more the wee bit burnie of the Forth. He took with him the first, and as it proved the last, official recognition of his work in India—a certificate signed by the Governor, General Sir John Lawrence, conferring upon him a Degree of Honour for "eminent proficiency in the Bengallee language."

*Poor bairn, I wish she was with her mother.*

Henry to Jemima about his betrothed,  
December 1869.

*I am going to be good for once in my life and leave everything to Janie. Poor bairn I don't see why she should not have the delight of ordering people about for once in her life. I should like her to take a stock of pleasant impressions (sunny memories of foreign lands as Mrs. Stowe called them) of places with her to India so that she might have something to fill her mind with during the somewhat solitary hours when her husband is in Cutcherry.*

Henry to Jemima about his proposed wedding trip,  
May 6, 1871.

*"I felt like a murderer."*

Henry on January 28, 1873.

## Chapter IV

### JEANIE

**H**ENRY returned to Britain in the spring of 1868, after ten years of absence. During that absence his father and his Aunt Jane had died; his favourite sister, Maggie, had become the minister's wife at Eyemouth; his mother, Jemima, had been settled with his eldest sister, Phemie, in Aunt Jane's house; his eldest brother, David, was dividing his time between seeking employment or haunting libraries in London and keeping Jemima company in Scotland; he and his brother Allie, at this time in Abyssinia, had become the main pillars of the family finance.

Henry returned with two years' furlough ahead of him and plunged back into family life. He took Jemima and David and Phemie on an expedition to France and Switzerland and bought an alpenstock for Jemima at the mouth of the valley down which the "young Frau" looks. He took Maggie and her husband, Stephen Bell, to see the sights of London and the Derby—not from the Grand Stand. He described this to Jemima.

27/5/69.

We took some Melton Mowbray pies out with us and lunched on the Downs. There was an immense gathering and the most extraordinary effect we witnessed was the sudden whitening of the Grand Stand when the crowd in it turned all their faces towards us to see the horses coming up to the winning post. Before that and after the horses had passed the appearance of the stand was quite black. This sudden change from black to white has been poetically compared by the reporter for the Daily Telegraph to a forest of aspens blown upon by the wind and showing only the underside of their leaves. To my prosaic mind it was more like a great heap of turnips covered by a black sheet which was suddenly withdrawn.

He re-established connections with Professor Geddes and other old friends in the University of Aberdeen; he argued with Jemima and Maggie and Stephen Bell about religion, and he wrote his first article—on "Christianity in India"—in the *Theological Review* of October 1869.

## *India Called Them*

All the time, as his furlough ran out, he must have become more conscious each day that it would not be good for him to return to India alone. He must find a wife. There is a family tradition that at first, following advice given to him by Phemie, he fixed his eye on one of "the fair cousin-hood of Dunfermline," as his brother Allie did with success a few years later. In Henry's case this did not lead to a match; he was always less conventional than Allie; his religious and his political views alike may have seemed dangerous to the rich branch of the house of B.

Then, almost at the end of his furlough, Henry found what he wanted, still through a family connection. Jemima's life-long friend, her old crony at Greenhill Bank, was Mrs. Howison, the Jane Watkins of the expedition to New Lanark. She had been the link which had brought Henry's sister, Maggie, and Stephen Bell together. She now did a similar service to Henry. A year or two older than Jemima, she had married just before her, and had a daughter, Eliza Christian, who was of practically the same age as Jemima's David. Eliza and David were great friends throughout life; it is an obvious guess that, but for the family crash, they would have made a match, and that David, through the crash, lost not only his own inheritance but also an heiress; there was plenty of money in the Howison family. The crash left David stranded. Eliza fell to another—William Goldie—and went off with him to Australia, where he became Town Clerk of St. Kilda's, near Melbourne; there, at the end of 1853, Eliza's first child was born and named for her grandmother—Jane Howison Goldie. But William Goldie did not settle in Australia. At about the same time that Henry went to India, William Goldie came back from Australia, qualified in 1860 as a surgeon, and set up in practice in Edinburgh. By the time of Henry's first furlough, William Goldie, with his wife and a string of daughters, was established as a fashionable doctor at No. 1, Greenhill Bank, with his mother-in-law, Mrs. Howison, now a widow, established at No. 2 next door.<sup>1</sup>

When during his first year in India, Phemie had admonished young Henry not to be taken up with the soft blandishments of any of them white roses in Calcutta, but to remember the brighter

<sup>1</sup> These houses, built about 1861, are still standing as 29 and 30, Morningside Road. William Goldie, by becoming a licentiate of the College of Physicians, was able to get the M.D. degree at St. Andrew's without further examination, on testimonials.

## *Jeanie*

ones growing up for him at home, she can hardly have had Janie Goldie in mind; Janie was then a rosebud barely five years old. But by the end of Henry's first furlough Janie, by the standards of that age, had grown up, or nearly so. She was a schoolgirl of 16.<sup>1</sup>

Just how and when Henry, then just twice her age, came to think of Janie as something other than a schoolgirl cannot now be determined. She does not appear in his or any other family letters at all till the last month of 1869, the last weeks of Henry's stay in Scotland; then she appears as already and recently engaged. Everything that is known of Henry suggests that he acted on impulse. Once he began to think of Janie, there would be no stopping; with Henry, as with his father, once steam was up there came a fearful haste.

And no impulse for him would be more natural than this romance. Henry at 32 still revolved at home in the close family circle, and the family saw no one outside it except a few intimate friends of whom Mrs. Howison was chief; Jemima and her crony Jane, putting their heads together, can have wished nothing better than that Jemima's youngest son should marry Jane's eldest grandchild. And Henry, though he was twice Janie's age, was never older than a boy at heart. It is a family tradition that, walking with her over Arthur's Seat, he showed her (as he showed to his son long after) the rocks which his youthful behind had polished in sliding down them in the Inzievar-Edinburgh days before the crash.

But Janie at 16, though she might seem old enough to become engaged, was not old enough to be married. The arrangement was that Henry should return to India and that Janie should follow and marry him there in two years' time, when she had turned 18. Henry wrote to Jemima in a letter of which the opening sheet has been lost:

" . . . her bargain for I don't understand that kind of love that cannot sacrifice self and I would rather be a Stoic than a Shylock.

<sup>1</sup> It is perhaps a sign of Janie's youth that no fixed spelling of her name was ever established. Officially she was "Jane Howison." To Henry she was "Janie" till he married her; then he took to adding a letter to her name and she was "Jeanie." Later still he added yet another letter and she became "Jeannie." In the title of this chapter she is named as she appears in the tablet which is her most lasting memorial in Eyemouth Church. This, too, was the form in which her name was given to one of Henry and Annette's children.

## *India Called Them*

However we won't indulge in gloomy phantoms or visions at this—the spring and blossoming time of our two lives, but will rather, as you may remember Livy says in the noble preface to his history, indulge in prayers and hopes for a happy progress and a good result. The two years will not be long in passing and by that time Janie will (D.V.) be only still more a 'wee modest crimson tipped flower' than she is now."

Then Henry goes on to describe a lover's incident in a cab and ends: "Poor bairn, I wish she was with her mother."

This letter is Henry all over, in its use of things read by him whether in English or in Latin as part of his natural speech to his mother, in his protecting tenderness, and in his unselfishness. Clearly on the missing sheet he made it plain that if Janie should in any way regret her bargain he would not seek to hold her.

When this letter was written, just before Christmas 1869, Henry was already in the last month of his furlough. There was a great Hogmanay family party, for which Henry provided sherry, port, and other strong delights, while instructing Phemie to get in some lemonade, "as that is Janie's favourite potation." There was an attempt, which came to nothing, by Henry, in connivance with Mrs. Goldie, his mother-in-law to be, to find a house in Edinburgh for Jemima and to get Jemima moved there. There was, early in January 1870, a lecture by Henry under the auspices of the Culross Temperance Society on "Life and Manners in Bengal."<sup>1</sup> And then in the last half of January 1870 Henry went back to India, while his affianced Janie went back to school and won a prize for French. The choice of Macaulay's *Critical and Historical Essays* as Janie's prize book was clearly dictated by Providence or by Henry himself. For to Henry Macaulay was always the prince of writers. It was in this volume that Henry's son William first read about Warren Hastings and Mr. Robert Montgomery's poems.

Henry on this occasion steamed from Southampton, instead of sailing from Gravesend, and he did not go alone. He took his eldest sister, Phemie, with him, in intention for two years, till Janie should join him in India. But Phemie did not stay and Henry did not wait so long.

If the hope was that Phemie, even at 39, might find a husband

<sup>1</sup> Henry later quoted freely from this in his first book on the *District of Bakarganj*.

## *Jeanie*

in Bengal, it was doomed to disappointment. Barisal, in the district of Bakarganj, to which Henry now found himself posted, was not a social centre, and Phemie was reaching a crabbed period in her life. Her visit to India produced some good letters home, but was not otherwise a success.

Phemie started back in the spring of 1871 and Henry followed a few months later to claim his bride. This change of plan may have been due to nothing but Henry's normal impatience. It may have been due to desire of avoiding some of the difficulties of a marriage ceremony in India. Henry had broken with all churches. In Scotland he could be and was married in a house, by Stephen Bell, his brother-in-law, in the home of Mrs. Howison, on September 12, 1871, when Janie was still under 18.<sup>1</sup> Crossing Europe to Brindisi he took her out at once to India. His whole expedition was compressed into four months of special leave. In May he had written of his plans to his mother.

6/5/71.

I don't know where I shall take Janie after I marry her but I think I should like to show her something of the Continent. If Mrs. Goldie liked she might go with us as far as Brindisi or Alexandria but I am going to be good for once in my life and leave everything to Janie. Poor bairn I don't see why she should not have the delight of ordering people about for once in her life. I should like her to take a stock of pleasant impression (sunny memories of foreign lands as Mrs. Stowe called them) of places with her to India so that she might have something to fill her mind with during the somewhat solitary hours when her husband is in Cutcherry.

Henry throughout his life was always throwing out happy thoughts for giving pleasure to others. The suggestion here of inviting his mother-in-law to join his honeymoon was perhaps his high-water mark in this line. It throws light also on the nature of his marriage. He went on to look forward to Jeanie's life in India.

I do hope that she will like India and I think that she will if the climate suits her. I would like her to try this place first for it is cool and healthy and I have got to be interested in the district. If however

<sup>1</sup> The marriage certificate gives Henry as actually living at the time in William Goldie's house, No. 1, Greenhill Bank, and the marriage as taking place at No. 2. The bride's age is 17; the witnesses are Henry's brother David and Janie's sister Annie (then aged 14).



### *India Called Them*

it should chance not to agree with her we would have to try to get a transfer. It is a great comfort to think that I have got a good house.

What was the nature of the place to which this Scots schoolgirl was going to start her new life? Henry described it fully and sympathetically in the book which a few years later he published on *The District of Bakarganj: Its History and Statistics*. From this work the quotations given below are taken.

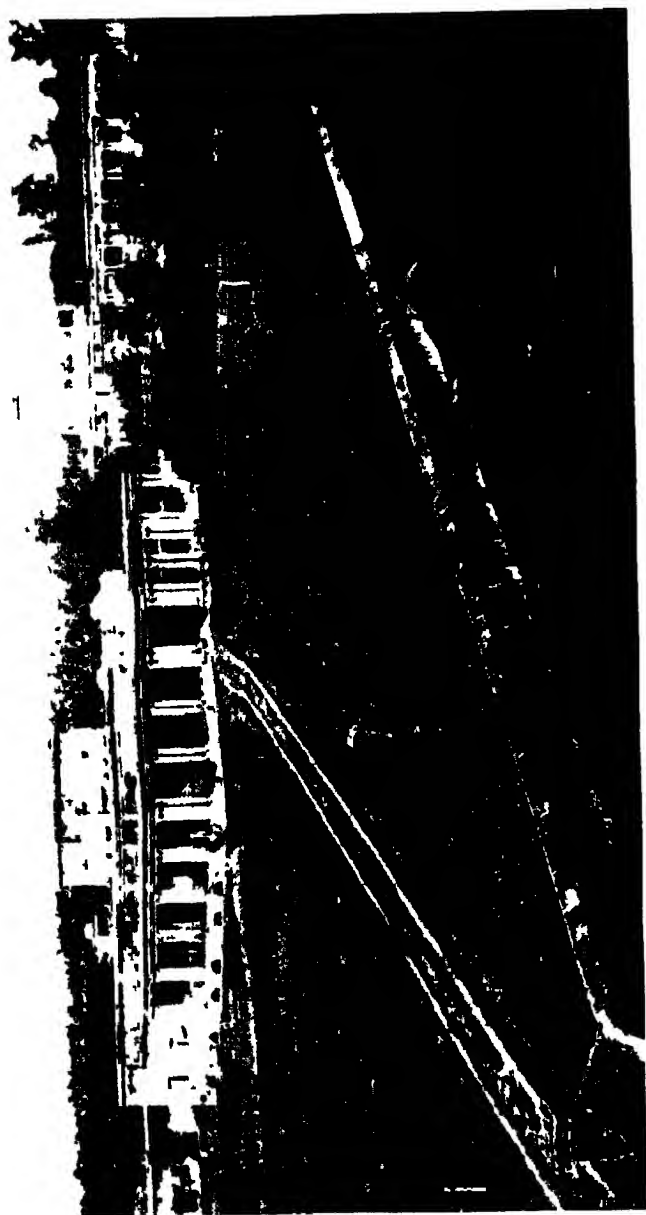
Bakarganj was nearly the size of Yorkshire, with a population approaching 2,000,000. Geographically it was part of the delta of the great rivers—Ganges and Brahmaputra—united in their last stages to make the Meghna. It was an alluvial formation as flat as a pancake, and cut by innumerable tidal creeks and water-courses. It was a vast ricefield which at one season of each year became a swamp. Henry compared it to an "agricultural Manchester, producing breadstuffs in place of cotton cloths, but without the art culture for which Manchester is so justly famous."

There is no ancient history of Bakarganj; no battles have been fought in it, or at least no traces of them now remain; there are hardly any resident aristocracy; and there are no art products of any kind. Other districts have their workers in ivory and silver, their shawl-makers, &c., but Bakarganj has none of these. Committees for International Exhibitions can get nothing from it to show in Europe as trophies of Indian skill or taste. It must be confessed, too, that there is something depressing in the air of Bakarganj, and in the continual prospect of swamps and muddy rivers. One longs for a dry tract of country, across which one could ride or walk without being brought to a stand every three or four hundred yards by the slimy bank of a khal.

Bakarganj was the backwoods of Bengal. It was all but inaccessible from any large centre of industry, trade, or education: four to seven days' journey by water from Calcutta, 180 miles away, three days' journey by water from Dacca, 75 miles away. It had no towns of its own. Barisal, the official centre and Henry's home, had 13,000 inhabitants spread over 6 square miles; it produced four newspapers, but had only one school each for boys and girls and practically no one went to the latter. "The peasants," as Henry said, "do not care for education; and besides, they need their children to gather their betel-nuts, to row their boats, and above all to herd their cattle."



*Jeanie at 17*



*Jeanie's Indian Home*

Bakarganj was backwoods, without the bracing climate of backwoods in other lands. Henry, writing to Jemima, had once called Barisal healthy, but he knew better. In his later account he began by quoting a predecessor from the beginning of the century: "The atmosphere depresses the spirits in such a manner as to cause a sensation as if a person was only half alive." He proceeded to give his contemporary account of its health.

The cold weather is pleasant, but it is not so bracing as that of the more northern districts, and does not last more than four months. It is said that the proximity of Bakarganj to the sea prevents its climate from ever being very cold. The general complaint against it is of its dampness. This depresses vitality, and is also most injurious to furniture, books, &c. It is impossible to keep a house dry unless it is built on arches. Many of the native government officials and professional men, and even many of the traders, belong to other districts, especially to Dacca. They complain of the salt air (*lona howa*) of Bakarganj, and they say that it gives them fever and indigestion. . . . Cholera is endemic in the district, usually occurring in the beginning of November, and again in April and May; for several years, however, it has not been very severe. Fever and dysentery appear to be the most deadly diseases. Dyspepsia, spleen, and rheumatism are common. As a remedy for rheumatism many of the inhabitants are in the habit of keeping an open issue (*seton*) in the arm or leg. Dyspepsia often assumes the form called *pitshul*. Dysentery and diarrhoea prevail throughout the year, the mortality being greatest at the termination of the rains, and during the cold season. During September and October a slight scorbutic tendency is often observed, owing to the absence of sufficient fresh vegetables, the country being at the time more or less under water (*vide* Bensley's Report for 1871). Cutaneous diseases—ringworm, itch, &c.—are common. The first is seen especially among boatmen and others who work in water, the soles of their feet being often drilled like a sponge.

The isolation, both external and internal, of Bakarganj life and the notorious unhealthiness of its climate affected the character both of its population and of its administration. No one lived there if he could live anywhere else. Officially, said Henry, quoting a friend, Bakarganj from the earliest times had been "the dustbin of Bengal." No officer was sent to it except as a punishment or because he was not thought good enough for a better district. The landlords were nearly all absentees. The traders,

### *India Called Them*

pleaders, and other professional men who with their servants mainly occupied Barisal did not make their homes there; as a consequence, said Henry, "there are comparatively few women in it and even of these a large proportion are professional prostitutes."

Even outside the towns like Barisal there was not the village life of other parts of India; the peasants were separated not only from the outer world but from one another:

Villages in Bakarganj, and especially in the south, are very different from villages in Behar or the north-west, or even in Bengal generally. The houses are much more scattered, and there is little of collective village life. Each house stands by itself on its mound, surrounded by a thicket of fruit trees, and there is often no other house in sight or nearer than several hundred yards. The intervening space, too, is generally a swamp across which it is toilsome to walk. In such villages the system of village police is almost non-existent. Mr. Reilly, in an interesting passage of his report on the Bakarganj police, has touched upon this peculiarity of life in the south of the district, and assigns to it the frequency of serious crime.

Henry summed up the general reputation of the Bakarganjites as follows:

We find, accordingly, that by general consent of foreigners whether Englishmen or inhabitants of other parts of Bengal, the people of Bakarganj have certain peculiarities which mark them out from the rest of their countrymen. These peculiarities are not, I am sorry to say, of an amiable description, and consist in the possession of superior craftiness and greater turbulence of spirit.

Of course Henry, with his unflinching capacity for extracting pleasure or interest from unpromising materials, found good things as well as bad to say about Bakarganj. He dwelt with delight on the greenness and freshness of its scenery, contrasting it with the weary arid plains of Cawnpore and Delhi; on the homesteads, each standing like moated granges embowered in bamboos, jak-fruit and plantain trees, tamarinds and palms; and above all on the rivers. Henry's picture of river traffic shows his sensitive eye.

The rivers frequently present an animated appearance from the number of boats which traverse them, and there is something cheering

## *Jeanie*

and inspiring in the sight of a fleet of white-sailed boats trooping through a large reach of one of the larger rivers. Such a sight is often seen to great advantage in the cold weather at Barisal, when boats of many shapes and districts come sailing down under the north wind, and sweep past the town on their way to Bakarganj and other rice-marts. The traffic on the rivers is no doubt very large, but their tidal nature may sometimes make it appear greater than it really is. Boatmen are very gregarious in their habits, and like to keep near other boats as much as possible. This is partly from a desire for companionship, and partly as a reminiscence of the times when it was not safe to travel alone in Bakarganj on account of the dacoits; but independently of this, it is easy to see that if rivers are tidal, and boatmen have to trust chiefly to their oars and towing ropes, the boats must keep a good deal together. Cargo-boats never row against the tide, and though they will tow against it, the river-banks are not always, or even generally, provided with towing-paths; so that unless there is a particular reason for hurry, they come to a halt with the turn of the tide. It is not always the same tide that is required throughout the journey. Boat-travelling is very circuitous, and the tides run up and down the rivers and khals in a very perplexing manner. Thus the journey from Barisal to Calcutta is far from being an ebb journey throughout. It is ebb as far as Jhalukatti, then flood, then ebb again; and there are one or two changes before the Baleshwar is reached and ascended with the flood. A boat arriving at a place where a change of tide is required, before the tide that has brought it has run out, moors or casts anchor, and thus gives time to other boats to come up. Hence the sight so frequently seen of a crowd of boats anchored at some turn of the stream. As soon as the required tide commences they set off together, and the river appears to be covered with boats; but if we were to return to the place in another hour, we might perhaps not see a single boat. The river now appears deserted, and will remain so till a turn of the tide bring a fleet of boats from the opposite direction.

He found good also in its people. While admitting their craftiness and turbulence, he stressed also their amiability and their kindness to children.

The general character of the Bengali is amiable. . . . He is particularly fond of children. . . . Bengalis, indeed, are said to spoil their children by over-indulgence, and certainly they seem to indulge their whims to almost any extent. I remember to have seen a common Bengali peasant ploughing his field, which happened to be at the time under two or three inches of water, while his child was perched

### *India Called Them*

on his shoulder. On my asking why he had the child with him, I was told that it cried at being left behind when his father went to plough. So that father had taken him out with him, though he would have to bear his weight the whole fore-noon in order to keep him out of the water.

But when all this was said he summed up the nature of the country in discussing how it came to be settled: the settlers must have been driven there from somewhere else.

I am inclined to think that no one would voluntarily occupy such a country. In the rains the country is almost one immense lake, in which the homesteads of the ryots appear as islands, and in April and May it consists of large treeless plains. The villages are never of very easy access; but things are at their worst at the beginning and at the end of the rains, for then there is neither enough water for boats nor sufficient dry land for foot-travelling. Add to this that the country swarms with mosquitoes, that there are numerous poisonous snakes, and that the ryots often lose their crops from over-flooding, and it will be admitted, I think, that the country is not a desirable residence.

Some ten years after Henry wrote this account there was a discussion in one of the Indian papers, *The Englishman*, as to the comparative attractions of different parts of Bengal. One letter may fitly be quoted:

Mr. Hunter does not institute any comparison between Bakarganj and the districts of Eastern Bengal all of which have an evil reputation, but says that the district is one of the most unpopular and unhealthy of the Province. Tastes differ and every district has its stout defenders, but this will seem a fair description to most civilians who have served in the drier districts of the Lieutenant Governorship of Bengal, as it does to

One who knows Bakarganj.

This letter was written from Calcutta while Henry was in Scotland, so that it cannot have been his, but it confirms his view of Bakarganj as a district to which only those would be sent who stood in the bad books of authority. This was the district to which Henry was posted for five long years.

This was the country to which Jeanie came freely and bravely to spend the spring and blossoming time of her life. There is now hardly any record of this time. No word of Jeanie's has survived.

## *Jeanie*

If Benedick Henry went on writing home to Scotland, all these letters, with one exception, were lost or destroyed. But from Phemie's letters of the year before a glimpse can be had of what Barisal was like to those like Jeanie who saw it at all seasons.

In June: Burrasaul is delightful just now, so cool and breezy—the rains are coming and a few goodly plumps have already fallen, making our compound like an emerald gem with the green trees waving around it.

In August: We are all rejoicing to think that the cold weather will be here soon.

In September: Rain still rain—it has never ceased since early morning but this month should end it and then the fine *cold* weather begins. . . . We have been obliged to give up our delightful walks through the jungle, that palmy region being declared unwholesome at this season.

In October: We do nothing just now but read through the day and sleep at night, the midday heat being *awful*. This is the hottest month of the year; the rains are over and it mellows the rice in the paddy marshes; the first breeze has forsaken us for the present. Even the mornings are stifling, but November is coming to cool us all again and then we can walk as usual. . . .

Our sunsets just now in spite of the great heats are truly gorgeous . . . the whole sky flashing with beauty from the most delicate golden to the richest crimson and then the moonlight is glorious. The lightning too is wonderful, flashing from behind a mountainous mass of clouds and throwing a weird blue light on everything. We stand upon the verandah watching all these *phenomena* from dusk till dinner time, to walk just now being utterly impossible, but I take vigorous *callisthenic* exercise in my bathroom every morning before the heat commences which keeps me healthy, the *only* disagreeable thing being having to do it in the *dark*, among the chatties! but I look for cobras *well*, before beginning.

This was the place into which Jeanie's baby was to be born early in 1873. Whether there was any doctor within reach is uncertain, but it is unlikely; there was certainly no suitable nursing attendance. So, in October 1872, Jeanie's mother set out on an 8,000-mile journey to be with her daughter at this crisis. While Mrs. Goldie was on her way, Henry wrote to his mother the one letter that survives of his early married life in India. The letter shows that Barisal was not wholly without other women's



### *India Called Them*

company for Jeanie. It speaks of a native fair as in prospect at a place about 6 miles off and of the ladies as thinking of going to it.

10/11/72.

There is a road to the place but we shall probably go by water. I shall send out a tent for the ladies and I hope they will enjoy themselves and get a little pleasant variety. Mrs. Bradbury and probably the Bensleys are going and the Babu is especially anxious that Mrs. Beveridge should go and see his "consort."

The amusements promised are theatrical performances fireworks and a dinner. Mr. and Mrs. Sale are going down to Calcutta tomorrow and it is not improbable that they may come up with Mrs. Goldie. I am sorry to say that I shall not be able to go down to Calcutta. . . .

12/11/72.

I have just come in from a walk. Jeanie has got a slight headache with the noise caused by the workmen who are repairing the flooring of the house but is otherwise well.

She has just got up some new music from Calcutta.

Some time late in December 1872 Mrs. Goldie made her way to Barisal. Some day in January 1873 Henry and Jeanie's child was born only to die. A few days later, on January 28th, Jeanie died. Henry at 36, after sixteen months of marriage, was alone again, and free to take Mrs. Goldie back to Calcutta on her return journey of 8,000 miles. They were together in Calcutta for a few weeks and then at the end of February Mrs. Goldie was seen off to England by Miss Annette Akroyd, a young Englishwoman who had come to India to start a school, and whom Mrs. Goldie had got to know through sharing a cabin on the journey out.

Looking at his dead schoolgirl wife, Henry, in his own words long after, "felt like a murderer." He decided in his first despair to ask for a transfer from Barisal. One of the letters of condolence which he kept refers to this.

2/2/73.

We the undersigned members of the Female Improvement Association at Barisal, beg respectfully to approach you with this letter expressive of our deep and heart-felt sorrow at the great and unexpected calamity which has befallen you. We would not have ventured to intrude upon you at this time of deep mourning . . . had

### *Jeanie*

we not been informed that on leaving this station on privilege leave you do not intend to return among us any more.

This letter, bearing about twenty Indian signatures, is itself evidence of what it says: of how Henry had endeared himself to the people he served, and of the sorrow that his going would cause. But Henry was never a quitter. Nor, where his affections had once been engaged, were they ever broken. As he had written to Jemima three years before, he had become interested in the district and the people of Bakarganj; he was engaged in writing about them. So when Mrs. Goldie had departed, Henry went back to Bakarganj; his first letter to Mrs. Goldie's new friend, Annette Akroyd, is dated from Barisal.

The next chapters show who Annette Akroyd was and how she came to be living in Calcutta with Mr. and Mrs. Monmohan Ghose.

*I had the fortune to have a father who was a Jacobin.*

William Akroyd of Stourbridge, May 1863.

*It is long since I lost hope of gaining anything by force except from fools.*

William Akroyd to his daughter Annette,  
December 5, 1864.

*Before it is just to say that a man ought to be an independent labourer, the country ought to be in such a state that a labourer by honest industry can become independent.*

William Akroyd at dinner of Poor Law Guardians,  
April 1841.

*Mr. Akroyd in seconding the resolution stated that he was no advocate for war at all.*

Report of Patriotic Fund Meeting during Crimean  
War.

*I have endeavoured through life in conjunction with others to place Stourbridge on a footing second to no place in the kingdom.*

William Akroyd, May 1863.

## Chapter V

### WILLIAM AKROYD OF STOURBRIDGE

**I**N the second quarter of the nineteenth century, in the small Midland town of Stourbridge in Worcestershire, there was established a business man of the name of William Akroyd, who became one of the leading citizens of the town.

As his name suggested, William Akroyd came of Yorkshire stock. His descendants in due course were able, to their material advantage, to prove themselves Founder's Kin of William Akroyd, who in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries was Rector of Marston and a priest in the Cathedral Church of York. This Rector, making his will in 1518, "an old man weak in body but sound in mind," left certain lands to two of his nephews, first to maintain them at Oxford or Cambridge, thereafter as trustees "to keep one scholar at Oxford or Cambridge to the end of the world." As a priest he had no children of his own to provide for, but he provided the chance of learning as fully as he could for his kindred. The trustees were to choose as scholar one near to the Founder in blood and bearing his name; failing such a scholar, one near in blood though not of his name; failing that an inhabitant of Marston or Hooton. In the second half of the nineteenth century the value of the lands so bequeathed multiplied ten times, as the town of Batley came to be built on them, and the Charity Commissioners in 1874 made a new scheme to use these increased resources. The William Akroyd Foundation helped to maintain the Batley Grammar School and became one of the original sources of the University of Leeds. William Akroyd Scholarships have helped and still help many a grammar school boy from the West Riding to a University. But there are Founder's Kin Scholarships still reserved for those who can prove descent from the brothers or uncles of the sixteenth-century Founder.

The Stourbridge William Akroyd, though of Yorkshire stock, was not, as a matter of strict inheritance, entitled to his surname. His connection with the Founder was unknown to him and was established only after his death. The connection came through

### *India Called Them*

his grandmother, Mary Akroyd, one of eight children of a prosperous yeoman and clothier of Ovenden near Halifax. Marrying John Bates of Halifax she became Mary Bates, but her son James quarrelled with his father, ran away from Yorkshire to the Midlands, and assumed his mother's maiden surname, becoming James Akroyd. He passed at the same time out of the will-making middle class in which his mother's family had been for generations, earned his living as a stone-mason in Birmingham, married there about 1800, and in due course apprenticed his son William to a currier.

Living in Birmingham through the time of the French Revolution and the Priestley Riots, this young James Akroyd, in revolt against his family, became a political rebel also. On a notable occasion in his own life later, William Akroyd of Stourbridge attributed all that he had been and done to the early influence of his father. From this father, whom he described as a Jacobin, he had imbibed a tendency to strong political opinions, a horror of dependence on others, and a conviction that every man had duties to perform not only to himself and his family but to the State. He had certainly inherited from his Yorkshire ancestors, and he transmitted to his children a full ration of "the strong sagacity and the dogged power of will" which Mrs. Gaskell<sup>1</sup> attributes as their birthright to the natives of the West Riding.

William Akroyd of Stourbridge, born in the year before Trafalgar and dying in the year before Bismarck's Franco-German War, was in his business career an epitome of his time. He reached manhood and completed his apprenticeship as a currier in Birmingham during the crisis of 1825-26, perhaps the worst year, as he described it later, that England had known. In depressions smaller towns are often less hit than great cities. Young William got the chance of a journeyman's job in Stourbridge and came there, not meaning to stay. But he did stay. He found people he liked in Stourbridge, and after four years as a journeyman came at the age of 26 to two decisions, to marry and to start in business as a currier on his own. The house in which he began and carried on for twenty years still stands in Foster Street, Stourbridge, surmounted by a brick structure on

<sup>1</sup> *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*, Chapter II.

### *William Akroyd of Stourbridge*

which in some lights the notice "William Akroyd, Currier," can still be read.

Once independent, William Akroyd, in his own words, "crept on and on in the same manner as a large number of persons did and would do." But he was not a man to creep along one line, above all in that era when industrialization was transforming England. He threw himself into many of the new activities which industrialization was bringing to his part of England; he was concerned with engineering, banking, railways. He held for many years the fee-ed position of High Bailiff of the Worcester County Court. He became manager of the Stourbridge Gas Works and in that capacity, by a combination of concessions and firmness, quelled a revolt of consumers who thought they were being charged too much and that they could get gas more cheaply by starting a rival company.

In all these activities William Akroyd proved himself an astute and successful business man. He wrote to his daughter Annette in December 1864: "I have been to a valve works meeting this afternoon and had the best of ancient Mr. Pitman out-bidding him for some shares that were for disposal." And two years before he had registered twenty-five shares in the Oldbury Carriage Works in Annette's name (doing the same with others of his children), not as a gift to her, for the shares were "hardly suitable for a young lady," but "in order to defeat a dodge of which the projectors think I have no knowledge." His business success was founded on wakefulness and on a cool though not unsympathetic judgment of his fellow-men. "Eight years to-day," he wrote to Annette, "since my brother died. And in that time I who have had to do with many men have not met with one to whom I could place implicit confidence. Not that I don't know lots who if one knew them better would probably obtain the fullest measure of one's confidence." His success was based on other qualities as well: on what even his opponents recognized as unimpeachable integrity and on what his obituary notice described as the astonishing vigour of mind and capability for exertion implanted in him by nature.

William Akroyd's business success established him at last in Parkfield—a columned mansion just outside Stourbridge which used to be known as "Moore's Folly" and has now become a

### *India Called Them*

building estate. His success enabled him, in addition to making ample provision for his widow, to leave something approaching £10,000 to each of his large double family. But he was not first and foremost a business man. Like Francis Place a few years before him, he began as a journeyman and made a fortune as an employer. But, as much as Francis Place, he found his main scope and interest in public service rather than in private business. He became for twenty years the leading public character of his adopted town.

As a poor young stranger, he began humbly, in his chapel connection and by attending meetings of ratepayers. The chapel that he joined, having been founded as Presbyterian, had become Unitarian. William contributed £1 to a fund for clearing its debts at a time when he had very few pounds indeed. He went on at once to organize a penny library among the congregation. As he explained later, when he came to Stourbridge, he was in a library at Birmingham and for a time continued to get his books from that town, for there was nothing of the sort yet at Stourbridge; so William set out to meet the need for books, for himself and others. The demand for books in his new town proved overwhelming; the plan was widened to the establishing of a Mechanics Institute which grew and grew and of which William Akroyd in all its developments remained a prime mover.

Naturally he became the leading figure in his chapel community, Chairman of the Committee and Treasurer of the Provident Fund for innumerable years. And of course he attended chapel with great regularity though not always to his spiritual advantage. "The rain has reached us and filled our hearts with gladness," he wrote to his daughter one summer day when he was 60. "In this happy condition of mind I went to church and heard a funeral sermon which I have heard before and which made me a sadder but not wiser man. I'll turn Quaker. I see no good in praying machines; grease them as you will they won't go. That is, more than half of them won't—cannot—and they ought to go stone-breaking or organ-grinding." William Akroyd was a moral rather than a religious man. As he put it in one of his speeches, to his mind the discharge of duty was worship.

William Akroyd's other line of approach to public life, through attendance at meetings of ratepayers, led him straight to one of

### *William Akroyd of Stourbridge*

the storm centres of social policy in his period—the administration of the Poor Law. Rates in the eighteen-twenties went largely on outdoor relief of the poor. William Akroyd found himself made overseer of the poor and then, just as he was beginning to feel his feet in business, there came the famous Poor Law Report of 1834. William Akroyd had already impressed himself upon his townfolk as a young man to be used. Without his knowledge, he was nominated and elected to the Stourbridge Board of Guardians, one of the new local authorities designed to perform on English society a surgical operation—of cutting out a monstrous unhealthy growth of outdoor relief and subsidized sweated wages, without starving the poor in the process.

The Stourbridge Board of Guardians got established about 1837 and by 1841 had become so pleased with themselves and their work that they determined to celebrate themselves by a dinner. So one Friday in April of that year at the Vine Hotel “about 30 gentlemen sat down to a sumptuous repast. . . . The viands were as is usual at the Vine of the very first order and in great profusion.” So the local Press reported.

The toasts and speeches were as profuse as the viands. After honouring duly the Queen, The Royal Family, the Army, the Navy, H.M. Ministers and the Lord Lieutenant, the 30 gentlemen worked steadily through themselves, with toasts to and replies from the Chairman, the Clerk, the Auditor, two or three Medical Officers, two Relieving Officers, two Collectors, two Registrars, Overseers late and present, the Governor of the Workhouse, and several more heroes unnamed. The Chief Medical Officer contributed a Bacchanalian song, and each of the elected guardians gave tongue. In the chorus of mutual back-slapping, in which an earlier speaker had described the New Poor Law as “the nearest approach of any to the 43rd of Elizabeth which was the best poor-law ever passed,” one speaker struck suddenly a new note. William Akroyd brought the diners back to consider the human realities of their task.

They were Guardians and they had duties to discharge not only to the rate-payers but to the poor themselves for whom all Poor Laws were passed. . . . Nearly all the remarks which had been made that evening had reference to the Poor Law Amendment Act and not to the parties who were receiving relief before



### *India Called Them*

that measure passed into a law. If they referred to the returns from 899 parishes, they would find it stated that there were a great number of individuals who could not possibly live upon the wages they were receiving without aid from the rates. . . . *Before it was just to say that a man ought to be an independent labourer, the country ought to be in such a state that a labourer by honest industry could become independent.* It had been said that the new Poor Law Bill was an amendment on the 43rd of Elizabeth . . . but they ought not to forget that they were very different in their nature, the object of the Act of Elizabeth having been to provide labour for those who were too idle to work, and food and shelter for those who were unable to labour for themselves. The great difficulty now was not to make people labour but to find labour for them to perform. (Hear, hear). . . . He knew that the great principle of the Bill of withholding outdoor relief was not in operation and could not be in operation because there were not workhouses enough to receive all who required relief. . . . Such being the case, he thought, when they said that Poor Law Bill was everything that they wanted, they were going too far.

The assembled diners, to do them justice, took this lecture from one of their youngest members very well. Mr. Akroyd resumed his seat amid loud cheers. He was allowed to get up again later and, on the plea of proposing the health of the Press, the only people present who had remained untoasted till then, he made a second speech. The Board of Guardians clearly recognized their coming master's voice; in due course they made William Akroyd their Vice-Chairman for five years, and then their Chairman for twelve years, till he insisted on resigning.

The administration of the Poor Law was the task to which, through most of his working life, William Akroyd gave more of his time and thought than he gave to any other single purpose; it was said that he never missed a meeting of the Board for more than twenty years. His aim, of course, was to reduce pauperism and he prided himself on doing so. But he never forgot the days of his own poverty or what it was to be a workman dependent on a wage. The sentence italicized in his speech (italicized because obviously he spoke it with special emphasis—and he repeated it) might well have stood as the text of a book written by his grandson a hundred years later, on Full Employment in a Free

### *William Akroyd of Stourbridge*

Society. What William Akroyd meant in practice was something different from what his grandson meant, to suit the conditions of his day. He meant first and foremost repealing the Corn Laws, and removing obstacles to the growth of industry and trade.

William Akroyd was naturally an early and ardent Anti-Corn-Law Leaguer, working with the League locally from its beginning, getting his Board of Guardians to pass a resolution in favour of repeal, becoming by 1841 recognized by his opponents as the "great gun of the political economists of Stourbridge," organizing meetings and having to deal with Chartist interruptions, corresponding with Cobden and Bright to persuade them to come to speak.

As another means of furthering the same cause, and no doubt of increasing his income, he became for a time a newspaper correspondent—a course which near the end of his life he recommended for imitation by any young man who desired to advance himself. He was always rather proud of his connection with the Press and had the good sense as a public man to be polite and helpful to reporters. They repaid him by reporting him with a clarity which is evidence both of their skill and of his. He seems never to have waffled even after the most sumptuous efforts of the Vine. As the local paper said of him in an obituary notice, "he was eminently a man of action endowed with perfect presence of mind and with all his resources at command in emergency."

To William Akroyd in the 'forties Free Trade was not politics, but a crusade cutting across all parties. He said this in terms which echo Cobden. To party politics he came later—only when he was a leading citizen. He came, of course, as an ardent Liberal, making good thumping anti-Tory speeches, contrasting the miserable condition of the country before 1832 and 1846 with its present prosperity, and defining Liberalism in a way not unfamiliar to his successors on the Liberal hustings. "He did not say that the new prosperity was owing to any government or any party, but he did say that it was owing to the policy which in order to distinguish it was called Liberal—Liberal because it had regard to the interest of the whole and not to any part or section."

When he came to party politics, he threw himself into them with characteristic thoroughness. He devoted unlimited personal trouble to securing the registration of voters and set out the

## *India Called Them*

results of his efforts in vast statistical letters to the local papers, proving that East Worcestershire was predominantly Liberal, however it might vote at elections. The persuasive effect of one of these letters was slightly marred by the fact that in an argument on another subject a few days before he had said: "I have not much faith in figures myself; they can be turned any way." This was duly reported and duly exploited by an opponent.

From the late 'fifties onwards William Akroyd was in the centre of every political fray in his Division. He appears in an advertisement as honorary secretary of the Liberal Committee for East Worcestershire in a bye-election of 1861. He gives up a holiday with his family in order to run an election in 1865; for that and a later contest he raises large sums for the Liberal cause, for contests were even more costly then than now:

I have begged about £5000 and by dint of taxing the Bills hope to get out for £4000 or little more and so we start fair on the next campaign which win or lose will be my last.

His last campaign was 1868, when at intervals of a few months two elections were fought in East Worcestershire. His daughter Annette's diary for that year—she was then 25—is full of election activities, canvassing, dining candidates, and so forth.

The first election for Lyttelton against Laslett ends in triumph for Annette. "Our majority 279 against bribery, treatings, etc." The second election, in November, ends on a sad, familiar note: "Our election lost for Mr. Martin—a horrible sensation to be unsuccessful."

But William Akroyd was a party politician only as he was everything else as well in Stourbridge. He had come there as a poor unknown working man at 22. By 42 he had reached the stage of having his portrait presented to him at a dinner by his townfolk. From that time onwards, no public meeting in the town, whatever its purpose, was complete without him. Protests against income tax, demands to legalize marriage with a deceased wife's sister, meetings about waterworks or a new burial-ground or a Dispensary, meetings to establish a Sanitary Association or a School of Design, meetings to elect a minister for Stourbridge Church<sup>1</sup> or raise a Patriotic Fund for widows and orphans of the Crimean War, whatever the occasion, William Akroyd was there, often

<sup>1</sup> Now St. Thomas's Parish Church

### *William Akroyd of Stourbridge*

as Chairman, generally moving or seconding "in a very able manner" one of the principal resolutions, always making a pointed and well-reported speech. On one occasion, being asked to second a resolution for establishing a School of Design, he was about to speak shortly, but the meeting recalled him and demanded a longer speech; he proceeded to emphasize the duty of landowners to promote cultivation of their resources. On another occasion choice of him to support the raising of a Patriotic Fund in the Crimean War was clearly dictated by his known attitude to war. It gave him a chance to remember his father and the Jacobin view of the Napoleonic Wars.

Mr. Akroyd in seconding the resolution stated that he was no advocate for war at all and therefore he felt some responsibility in taking part in the present meeting. He would not, however, enter into a discussion about war generally; his notion of the present war was that if any war could be just this was a just war, and it was a holy war if any war could be called holy. It was a war in which great and important principles were at stake. It was nearly 200 years since this country was found fighting for great principles, for unfortunately, since then, the wars in which this country had always engaged, had been against the liberties of mankind. . . . The war to which he alluded (as the last war fought by us for principles) was when Oliver Cromwell took the part of the Low Countries against Austria, a tyrant second only to the one against whom we were now at war. He rejoiced that for once England and France were together on the side of liberty. . . . And having entered into war, though war itself was repugnant to the mind, the more earnestness thrown into it the better and the sooner was it likely to end. . . . The raising of a large Patriotic Fund would be a sign of popular feeling which becoming known abroad through the press, might do something towards deciding the wavering despots of the continent . . . to throw their contemptible weight on that side of the scales.

A few years after this William Akroyd won his greatest victory. Through practically all his time in the town, Stourbridge had wanted a railway. But efforts made by others in the 'thirties, 'forties, and early 'fifties all failed. At last about 1859 William Akroyd put his back into the business, and by 1863 the railway was practically there—his acknowledged child. He became and remained its Chairman.

## *India Called Them*

William Akroyd had already had one civic presentation of a picture at 42. By the time he was 60 his townsfolk decided he must have another, which this time took the form of an inscribed tea tray, a tea service and a candelabrum. There appears to have been no obvious occasion for this presentation; William Akroyd had not endowed a hospital or retired from any post; he had not just been defeated for Parliament, or had a birthday, or suffered any other reverse. The tea tray came to him out of the blue sky in his sixtieth year, as "the appreciation of the personal character and of the zeal, ability, and integrity with which he has for many years laboured to promote the interests of this town and neighbourhood." It was received by him with trepidation as to what he should say on the occasion and even greater trepidation as to what might be said by others. As he wrote to his Annette:

Already I hear of some six who propose to butter me. Of course each *one* will attribute to *me* the virtues he thinks he possesses himself. So I may expect to be presented in a sort of hybrid character, a compound of weaknesses for which I have the most sovereign contempt.

Whatever William Akroyd might say to his daughter, there can be no doubt that the presentation was a very pleasant affair, and that 20-year-old Annette, who had had the responsibility of choosing the tea tray, enjoyed herself hugely. Some at least of the butter was genuine; much of it came from men who were careful to point out that they did not like Mr. Akroyd's politics; the testimonial, said the Chairman, was started by persons who really differed from the man they desired to honour.

And whatever William Akroyd might say, neither Annette nor any of his townsfolk can have believed that he disliked making speeches. On this occasion, as on others, he made two speeches at least: he jumped at the chance of recalling his Jacobin father and his early days, of making amends to opponents, of declaring his central purpose:

If at any time he had hurt any man's feelings, it was not his intention to do so. If he had done so, he hoped it would be forgiven, and that it would be laid to the account not of his intention but of his nature which led him on all occasions to take the shortest possible route towards that which appeared to him to be the truth and that which he thought was right. . . .

### *William Akroyd of Stourbridge*

He had endeavoured in all things to do that which he professed to do. He had endeavoured through life in conjunction with others to place Stourbridge on a footing second to no place in the kingdom (cheers), and he would venture to say that taking into account the amount of the population it was second to no place in the kingdom. (Renewed cheering.) Days like that however, were not to men at his time of life days of unalloyed happiness and enjoyment, for they brought to mind men with whom he had worked in the past, who were no longer with us.

And he proceeded to name them. William Akroyd was a remarkable man. His story prompts a comparison with that earlier radical already named whose fame is established.

William Akroyd was like Francis Place in beginning life as an operative and in a few years launching out on his own to make a fortune. He had probably at least as much native ability and energy and persistence, with a greater command of words. He did not, like Place, have a son old enough to replace him in business and let him concentrate on public work. He did not have the searing experience of an unsuccessful strike with starvation to follow, that lived always in Place's mind and drove him on in fighting for a place for trade unions. But William Akroyd was like Francis Place in never forgetting what he had most wanted as a poor young man—*independence and the chance to read*—and so trying to get them for others. And he had learned from his father that man owes a duty to the State.

For practical purposes the main difference between the two men was that Francis Place was in London and William Akroyd in Stourbridge. In London one had no neighbours; there was no scope for local patriotism; but there might be contact with national government. In Stourbridge duty to the State inevitably took the absorbing form of service to one's neighbours. So, while Francis Place, working centrally, brought about the Repeal of the Combination Laws, William Akroyd as his crowning achievement brought a railway to Stourbridge. Francis Place has seventy volumes of papers in the British Museum and several biographies. William Akroyd is forgotten except by archivists in the town where for twenty years he was indispensable.

*I don't think any general (that isn't Papa's or Mamma's) argument ever altered an opinion of mine.*

Annette Akroyd (aged 18) to her father,  
March 3, 1861.

*We have been imprudently before our times and have no right to blame others who have kept pace with them.*

Mrs. E. J. Reid (Founder of Bedford College,  
London) to Annette Akroyd, 1865.

*The greatest benefit that you can confer upon a man is to give him a due respect for women.*

Mrs. E. J. Reid to Annette Akroyd,  
January 7, 1864.

*Never was there a more willing and indomitable spirit than yours.*

Mrs. Aubrey to Annette Akroyd,  
November 29, 1871.

*At the present moment a thousand Hindu homes are open to receive and welcome English governesses, well-trained accomplished English ladies, capable of doing good to their Indian sisters both by instruction and by personal example.*

Keshub Chunder Sen on English Tour,  
August 1, 1870.

*Of the greater part of India, it can still unfortunately be said that it has no girls. It has children and married women and no such class such as we think of here when we speak of our girls.*

Annette in writing of Lady Phear's and her own  
work in India in February 1898.

## Chapter VI

### A YOUNG LADY BEFORE HER TIMES

**S**UCCESSFUL business men were as plentiful as blackberries in the Victorian Age and presentation tea trays were not rare. Nor fortunately was public spirit rare, though there cannot have been many, even in that age, who combined so much energy and ability and private success as William Akroyd with making public service still their major interest. But William Akroyd had another special quality also, in his family relations. He was an early-Victorian with a post-Georgian outlook.

Physically his family was Victorian, in its size and in its death roll. He married first, when he started in business on his own account, Sarah Walford, a young woman of his own age of 26; the daughter of a livery stable keeper who had at least one claim to originality—that he owned the first funeral hearse in Stourbridge. When Sarah died at 45, having borne him six children, in the next year he married again and had another five children. The births or baptisms and deaths or burials of this double family are worth recording to illustrate a bygone era.

Married, First. 1830. Sarah Walford (died May 17, 1849, aged 45).

1. Eliza, baptized September 11, 1831, died September 15, 1858, aged 27.
2. James, baptized March 17, 1833, buried March 30, 1834, aged 13 *months*.
3. Sarah Ellen, baptized March 5, 1837, buried September 9, aged 5 *months*.
4. William, baptized January 3, 1840, buried February 14, aged 6 *weeks*.
5. Fanny Louisa, born December 26, 1840, died November 25, 1926, aged 85.
6. Annette Susannah, born December 13, 1842, died March 29, 1929, aged 86.

Married, Second. November 30, 1850. Mary Anne (daughter of Mr. Perks, Tailor, Stourbridge, born September 18, 1816, died March 20, 1889, aged 72).

7. Lucy Ann, baptized October 26, 1851, buried September 25, 1852, aged 12 *months*.



## *India Called Them*

8. James, baptized October 9, 1853, buried January 13, 1854, aged 5 months.
9. Kate Lloyd, born March 20, 1855, died February 21, 1934, aged 78.
10. Helen, born February 2, 1856, died September 16, 1927, aged 71.
11. William Edward, born May 10, 1857, died in Gisborne, New Zealand, October 16, 1916, aged 59.

Here in baptismal and burial records of those who would have been my aunts or uncles is the "sheer waste of suffering" which H. G. Wells described and E. J. Sullivan illustrated so strikingly in *A Modern Utopia*. There was nothing wrong with William Akroyd's stock. Of those who survived infancy, all but one lived vigorous lives to a full span. But five out of the eleven died as babies.

William Akroyd's family did not escape the common Victorian fate. But they did not have a Victorian tyrant for a father.

The first of all his surviving letters to Annette was occasioned by his having to pull out a tooth for her because she feared to go to a dentist, and presents a picture worth recording in full:

Foster Street,  
Jany. 10th 1853.

My dear Annette,

You did not mention the opening made by the tooth you parted with on the morning of your departure hence, and I am therefore led to hope that you have forgotten the pain and anguish you suffered in the operation—or rather in the preparation for it, and the several unsuccessful attempts at it.

Well I am glad it has not interfered with your happiness, and am myself but too sorry ever to be compelled to give you pain either of mind or body. But everyone has duties to perform, most of them very agreeable, some otherwise, and none must or can be neglected without bringing evil consequences.

Now you see the painful duty which devolved on you and I, you to bear and I to inflict pain, will again arise, and I am writing to ask you to think about it and to reason so far upon it as to lead to the conviction that it is better to bear a little present evil—pain—than a long period of suffering in after life. And I wish you could so far conquer your dread of dentists as to let one of them draw your next tooth; they are used to the operation and perform it with more skill than I can; at the same time if you cannot do this I will do my best and hope to succeed more readily than on the last occasion.

## *A Young Lady Before Her Times*

I shall entrust you with a dozen kisses which with my love you will divide with dear Eliza and Fanny and so remain your affectionate  
Father.

P.S. I am very pleased with your account of your travels to the Red River and your bog-trotting after. Fine writing and strait lines are of secondary importance compared with good ideas conveyed in proper language. In this I think you were successful.

This appeal to reason in 10-year-old Annette is written by William Akroyd with special care and legibility, not as he wrote sometimes in the agonies of gout. The principle underlying his appeal he made explicit, when some twelve years later there was a question as to whether Annette should come home for Christmas or enjoy herself elsewhere:

I am right glad to hear that you are enjoying yourself free from all fear of being "commanded" to come home. It is long since I lost hope of obtaining anything by force except from fools.

This was pure Liberal doctrine in family relations. Least of all was William Akroyd one who used his money power over his children. He had put himself back again by his own exertions into the will-making class. But he did not shake his will at his descendants. On his 64th birthday, Annette notes in her diary: "Papa . . . presented each of us five with £1,000 worth of Stourbridge Railway Shares"; a month later (he was to die before reaching 65), "Papa explained to us about the will." William Akroyd wanted his family to know just how they would stand and he wanted them to have the maximum of freedom. He arranged matters so that if his widow and children chose to live together they could do so, but if any of them wished to go and live by herself she should have more money to pay the additional costs. He was a most original early Victorian father.

Nor, while William Akroyd lived, was there any of that driving out of old affections by new ones which *Jemima Beveridge* had noted in her husband's family. To the three surviving daughters of the first wife—Eliza, Fanny, and Annette—the second wife came in as "Mama"; there still survives a rhyming loving non-sense letter written by her to them in the days of her engagement. But the youngest of the three learned at the critical age of seven

## *India Called Them*

what it was to be without a mother, and the knowledge helped her later to a critical decision as a mother when her own daughter was eight. Annette learned also to idolize her father. Through all her wanderings she kept an envelope of "My beloved father's letters." Sixty years after his death, almost the last action of her long life was to care for her father's grave behind the Presbyterian Chapel in Stourbridge.

All William Akroyd's children were devoted to him, for he was that kind of father. But Annette, the youngest child of his first marriage, was his special friend. The children of his second marriage were children still when he died. His elder daughter Fanny, in relation to Annette, took second place and followed her lead. Annette was physically a tiny creature, never much more than 60 inches high. But she held those inches as upright as a ramrod and every inch of her radiated pure energy and indomitable will. To those who in later life came to know her best she seemed to have more than a touch of Queen Elizabeth and showed something of that sovereign's mien.<sup>1</sup>

Of course when young Annette wanted higher education she was allowed to get it. At least she got the highest that was going for young ladies of her time. There were no University degrees for women when Annette grew up.<sup>2</sup> But Bedford College in London was there for the higher education of ladies. It had been founded in 1849 on an undenominational basis. Its founder, Mrs. Reid, was a Unitarian, as were most of her associates. William Akroyd and his family were Unitarians. When Annette at 18 asked for higher education, she made naturally for Bedford College. She went there with her elder sister Fanny, and she spent there three whole sessions from 1860 to 1863. She learned mathematics among other things from Richard Holt Hutton, the distinguished first editor of the *Spectator*; in a letter which he wrote to her a few years later, he spoke of "your acute and reflective mind."

Annette enjoyed herself hugely at College and proved an outstanding student. This is shown by her certificates. It is shown

<sup>1</sup> Annette in early childhood appears with a dog on the dust-cover.

<sup>2</sup> Degrees for women began in London in 1878. Even the radical University of London by the late 'sixties had only got itself to the point of being willing to examine women, not by the same paper as men, but by a different set of questions of the same standard; Annette, as is recorded later, went through this solemn farce of passing a different paper of the men's standard.

## *A Young Lady Before Her Times*

even more by the letters which Mrs. Reid wrote to her at the time and after; the letters were for Annette's elder sister also, but were sent to Annette as the leader. "You never think trouble of doing a kind action or of obliging me." "It seems to me that such girls as you two earnest workers do more for these thoughtless ones than we elders with our little sermons and our heartfelt desire to see them improve." Mrs. Reid liked Annette so much that she wanted more pupils from Stourbridge. "Surely there must be a few Akroyds there under divers names." She made Annette her recruiting officer and her secret emissary for paying the fees of girls who could not come without such help.

One of Annette's own letters of this time shows unmistakably in the girl of 18 the woman of the future. After recording "splendid lectures" at College, on Greek literature, Latin, and the Russian climate, she refers to heated student arguments.

My motto is, when I see anyone getting warm, "Well, it's no use, no argument will ever alter an opinion, unless its a very *unobstinate* person's." . . . I do not think any general (that isn't Papa's or Mamma's) argument ever altered an opinion of mine.

All her days only someone whom she loved as much as she loved her father, her husband, or her son William, had much chance of changing by argument any opinion of Annette's, once she had formed it.

Annette at 21, returning from Bedford College to Stourbridge with her sheaves of certificates and her education, wanted to use her brains in doing something useful. Most of all she would have liked to help her father. She offered to take bankruptcy off his hands, that is to say, to do some of his routine work as High Bailiff of the County Court, but he answered that what she could do would not really save his time. She then made another proposal, which her father described as "equally kind but far more important" at whose nature it is not possible now to do more than guess; one may guess that in one form or another it meant working for a living and taking herself off her father's hands completely. But this was trying even William Akroyd too high. No doubt he was sympathetic to his favourite daughter. Some years before, as an alternative to Bedford, he had suggested making her some kind of secretary to himself. "Hurrah, for the

### *India Called Them*

secretaryship," wrote her bosom friend Lucy Harrison. "What a stunner your father is! You can book me as under-clerk at once."

But she went to Bedford College instead and when she came home there did not seem much real work for her to do. William Akroyd had been delighted to meet his daughter's demand for education. He used to say that he had no education himself, but had given education to his daughters, so that all difficult questions could be referred to them. But apart from the interest of their company, he found no simple way of using their active brains and inexhaustible energies. His daughters were delightful, but why would they insist on growing up? "I scarcely can imagine," he wrote to Annette at 18, "a reason for rejoicing because girls grow older. With lads it is otherwise." But William's only surviving lad was barely four years old; he never had Francis Place's chance of handing over his business to a son and becoming free for public service. To hand over to a daughter seemed impossible—and anyhow "Mama" the step-mother would not have stood for that.

So ardent Annette, in her years from 22 to 27, records in her diary little but the conventional round for young ladies with prosperous Papas: "tracing" nearly every Monday and Tuesday, Chapel and Sunday school every Sunday, Choral classes, Ragged School collections, balls, social engagements, visits to friends, journeys to London with visits to Parliament (once she heard Dizzy and Mill and Lowe), and a yearly trip to the seaside. She broke this round once by going back after three years to Bedford College, sitting an examination and carrying off £8 as a first prize for Latin; her diary characteristically understates this achievement: "learnted that I had passed." In the year following she started learning Greek. But all this was frittering to a creature of first-class brain and overwhelming energy. One of Annette's mentors in London wrote to her at this time that with ragged schools and Sunday school and so on she appeared well occupied, but the tone of the letter shows that Annette did not think so.

In the Stourbridge 'sixties there was nothing that a well-endowed young lady, however well educated, could do except try to find a husband to whom she could look up without too great a strain on her humour. That, even in Mrs. Reid's view, was largely the purpose for which she had been trained. Bedford

### *A Young Lady Before Her Times*

College was meant not to take young women away from being wives but to turn them into wives better worth marrying. "The greatest benefit you can confer upon a man," she wrote to Annette, "is to give him a due respect for women."

Finding in Stourbridge a husband whom she could respect was for anyone as clever as Annette not altogether simple. A diary note made by her at 22 suggests the alarming young lady that she must have been to provincial males:

February 22. Bachelor's Ball. Very great fun in some things.  
Not very lively (mentally). Good dancing.

Annette between 23 and 27 was an example of a general rule of statecraft: that the widening of educational opportunity and the opening of new careers for those who have been without them hitherto—whether they are boys from elementary schools or natives of India or women—ought to proceed together. If educational opportunity runs ahead of career opportunity, there will be trouble. Annette was not unhappy, but, in a phrase used to her by Mrs. Reid she was experiencing what it was to be imprudently before her times. If William Akroyd had lived a full span, Annette would probably have gone tracting and young ladying, till she met the normal fate of Victorian young ladies. There would have been no occasion for this volume.

But William Akroyd ended suddenly through dropsy before he was 65. The exertions and the disappointment of the November 1868 election left him indisposed. Just before Christmas he fell ill; early in January Annette went away "to keep home quiet for the dear invalid"; three days later she was called back to find Papa to all appearance dying. Doing for her father what so often later she was to do for her children in fighting death, she, not his wife Mrs. Akroyd, sat up with her father all that night and the next night. But in a few days more, on January 17, 1869, he died, leaving as her diary records, "blankness and dreariness inexpressible."

He left room and need also for a completely new life for Annette. The double family which centred round William Akroyd broke with his death. The second Mrs. Akroyd, though she had become Mamma to the first family, had clear views as to the future: five women without regular occupation should not try

### *India Called Them*

to live together in the same house. Mrs. Akroyd's portrait suggests that when she had made up her mind she held to it. Annette at 26 and Fanny at 28 were uprooted.

Three months after William Akroyd was in his grave, Annette's diary notes: "Mamma pronounced divorce in the family; was very decided, but rather hard-hearted." Parkfield with all its memories was abandoned. Mamma and her three children hived off to one furnished house in London. Annette and Fanny, after staying to pack and sort papers, hived off to another. They had no careers ready made and no need to earn their livings. The world was all before them where to choose, empty as the world always becomes suddenly empty, whatever one's age, when one's last parent is just dead.

Education for all was in the air. The Working Men's College had been founded by Frederick Maurice and Thomas Hughes in 1854. It was followed by a Working Women's College eleven years later. Annette was to some extent associated with this foundation; both Mrs. Reid and her friend Lucy Harrison in 1865 wrote of it to her as "your Working Women's College." But, though she visited it occasionally, she took no regular part in it while William Akroyd lived; she had home ties which were sacred. And when he died she filled most of the first empty year with a new but well-recognized form of young ladying. Duly chaperoned by a Mrs. Aubrey, Annette and Fanny and a third young woman, Meta Brock, made an immense continental tour: Antwerp, the Rhine, Heidelberg, Black Forest, Schaffhausen, Zurich, Lucerne and the Rigi, over the Gotthard (one could not go through it then) to the Italian Lakes, Italy from end to end, and back again through new parts of Switzerland and France. Annette herself broke the tour for a month to come alone to England and talk family business with Mamma, but the talk "all ended miserably" and she went back to her companions in Italy. It was the end of July 1870, eighteen months after her father's death, before she was really back home again.

In her absence the fates had been turning the wheel for her. The Unitarian connection had sent her to Bedford College. The same connection now led her to a longer and more fateful journey.

The moment was one of great general interest in India, which had become since the Mutiny the brightest jewel in the Imperial

### *A Young Lady Before Her Times*

Crown; it was a time of a special interest in the religious movements of the East. Ram Mohan Roy in 1830 had founded the association known as the Brahmo Samaj to purify Hinduism of what he declared to be its popular later errors and to establish a monotheistic worship. A generation later Keshub Chunder Sen had set out to carry this movement forward to abandonment of marks of caste distinction and other bad customs, such as child marriage, associated with Hinduism; he became the leader of the New or Progressive Brahmo Samaj. In Britain the Unitarians above all felt themselves to be peculiarly close to these Indian reformers. In the eighteen-sixties and seventies, birds of very different religious feathers did their best to flock together. Keshub Chunder Sen in 1866 had given to many the impression that he was about to embrace Christianity. When he visited England in 1870, he was welcomed by religious leaders of many denominations, but with special warmth by the Unitarians; he made to packed audiences a series of eloquent speeches.

Annette on her continental tour was out of England for the first part of Mr. Sen's English visit, but was by no means out of touch with his activities. Even in Switzerland she got hold of his scheme for the formation of a spiritual association of all and sundry; she copied it out and sent it to Miss Anna Swanwick in another part of Switzerland, seeking that lady's support.

Miss Swanwick was a good deal older and less hopeful than Annette; she feared that differences of dogmatic opinion would prove serious obstacles to the working of the proposed association. In this no doubt she was right. Mr. Sen in his final meeting felt further from his English friends, not nearer to them. Western and Eastern religious thought were not to be fused.

But there was another theme in Mr. Sen's speeches which for Annette had more practical importance. He dealt not only with religion but also with the position of women in India. He made a call on women in England to come out to India to help their Indian sisters, by giving them education without trying to change their religion. Towards the end of his tour, on August 1, 1870, he took the chair at a meeting of the Victoria Discussion Society when a Miss Wallington read a paper on an eternal subject: "Women as they are supposed to be and women as they are." But the event of the evening was the speech that followed from



## *India Called Them*

Mr. Sen as Chairman:

I am glad you have given me the opportunity of addressing you, for this is a ladies' society. I want your help. I have addressed meetings of men in various parts of the country and have besought them as humbly as I possibly could to help India. I now have the honour to make an urgent yet humble appeal to you English-women—I may say English sisters. I sincerely and earnestly call upon you to do all in your power to effect the elevation of the Hindu women. I dare say many of you have read in books in what way Hindu women may be helped by you. The best way in which that help can be given is for some of you to embark on the grand and noble enterprise of going over personally to that great country. . . . At the present moment a thousand Hindu houses are open to receive and welcome English governesses—well-trained, accomplished English ladies, capable of doing good to their Indian sisters, both by instruction and personal example. And what sort of education do we expect and wish from you? An unsectarian, liberal, sound, useful education. (Cheers.) An education that will not patronise any particular church, that will not be subservient or subordinated to the views of any particular religious community, an education free, and liberal, and comprehensive in its character, an education calculated to make Indian women good wives, mothers, sisters and daughters. Such an education we want for our ladies, and are there no feeling hearts in England capable of responding to this exhortation and invitation? I speak to you not for one, not for fifty, but for millions of Indian sisters, whose lamentations and wails penetrate the skies, and seem to come over to England at the present moment to stir up the hearts of their English sisters. Shall we hear those cries and lamentations with hearts of steel? Shall we not weep over this scene of spiritual and intellectual desolation that spreads far and wide over that once glorious country? Will you not come forward and say—"We will part with our substance if we cannot go over personally, but we who can go over personally shall go, for our Heavenly Father calls upon us to undertake this noble mission"? A noble mission decidedly it is, to go across the ocean and scale hills and mountains, to surmount difficulties and to risk health, in order to wipe the tears from the eyes of weeping Indian sisters, to rescue them from widowhood, from the evil customs of premature marriage, and to induce them to feel that there is something higher and nobler for them to aspire to.

### *A Young Lady Before Her Times*

My business this evening is to tell you, that in her distress India bids you come over and help her. Governments are trying to do what improved legislation can to crush and exterminate the bad customs. Philanthropic men have gone there to promote a liberal education amongst the males, and now if Englishwomen are ready to vindicate what are called women's rights in England, if they have to make platform speeches, let them show that their views and sympathies are not confined within the limits of this small island. . . . When you have given us the help for which I ask, England will have done her duty towards India, and the people of both lands will assist each other in pressing forward to the goal which we all desire to keep in view. (Cheers.)<sup>1</sup>

The spirit of this invitation was not unlike that which a little earlier was addressed from another Eastern country to an Englishwoman, by the King of Siam to Mrs. Anna Leonownens to come as governess to his children.

We hope that in doing your education on us and on our children . . . you will do your best endeavour for knowledge of English language, science and literature, and not for conversion to Christianity; as the followers of Buddha are mostly aware of the powerfulness of truth and virtue as well as the followers of Christ, and are desirous to have facility of English Language and literature, more than new religions.<sup>2</sup>

The rhetoric of Keshub Chunder Sen in making a similar invitation was all his own and had an electric influence on the Victorian ladies. Miss Emily Faithfull announced that if anyone wished to respond to the eloquent appeal which the Chairman had made she would be only too happy to receive communications.

Annette was not present on this occasion, but she was in London and she heard all about it. She took every remaining chance of seeing and hearing Mr. Sen: at Stanford Street—on August 14th—on the day after he had enjoyed a private interview with Queen Victoria, and at his farewell meeting on September 12th, when he declared himself more Indian than ever. The day after she busied herself in taking his bust to be packed. Annette was in Keshub's net.

<sup>1</sup> This and other addresses are printed in *Keshub Chunder Sen's English Visits*, edited by Sophia Dobson Collet and published in 1871. Miss Collet was one of Annette's early correspondents.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to *The English Governess at the Siamese Court*, by Anna Harriette Leonownens (Trübner, 1870.)

### *India Called Them*

But she did not act hurriedly. She went back to Stourbridge and felt that this was the place where she had friends. But there was no home there. She came to London and early in 1871 began regular teaching at the Working Women's College. She liked that well, but it did not fill her life. She went on seeing more visitors from India, among others Mr. Monmohan Ghose, Mr. Banerjee and Mr. Krishna Govinda Gupta.

Her decision to visit India, though it sprang from Keshub's appeal, did not depend on that alone, but on what she learned through these other friends from the East. Just how she came to that decision we have now no means of telling. There are probably in most lives at highest two or three decisions which are difficult as well as important. The important decisions are not always difficult; decision to marry or not and whom to marry is often so easy as to be inevitable, with every argument pointing the same way. The difficult decisions are those where the arguments each way are evenly balanced. On July 13, 1871, Annette's diary records: "Told F. of my wish to go to India."

After her sister Fanny, one of the next people she told was her continental chaperone, Mrs. Aubrey, whom she named a few years later as one of the two people to whom she would go if ever she wanted advice on any course of conduct. "Mrs. Aubrey has a gift for looking at the questions brought to her as though they were *cases* to be decided. She spares neither thought nor sympathy for those she loves."

Mrs. Aubrey certainly loved Annette. As the letters from Mrs. Reid show, Annette was the sort of young woman who makes friends readily with older women; this was a quality which on the way to India prepared the way for decisive change in her life. Mrs. Aubrey's reaction to Annette's project was one of violent and sustained remonstrance. She wrote to her as "a mother to a darling daughter":

29/11/71.

Remember Annette, you are not strong. Never was there a more willing and indomitable spirit than yours, but physically you are nothing like as strong as Meta, and though you bore the cold very well, yet well do I remember how in Rome, in Leghorn, in Genoa and Milan, you succumbed to the great heat, and what was that to



*William Akroyd of Stourbridge*



• *Annette Akroyd at 22*

## *A Young Lady Before Her Times*

the heat of India! You little soft white-skinned wee woman, take pity on yourself and do not do this thing rashly.

But Annette on this occasion was not seeking Mrs. Aubrey's advice on a proposed course of conduct. Her mind was made up and none of the three people—father, husband, son—who could change her mind were in her life at that moment.

The die was cast, but Annette did not rush her fences. She prepared for her mission with characteristic thoroughness. In the autumn of 1871 she began lessons in Bengali, arranged by Mr. Gupta. As she was to teach school girls, she took also a course for governesses at the Home and Colonial College. All the while she went on teaching an English class at the Working Women's College, where her sister Fanny had become Lady Superintendent, and where her brother-in-law to be, James Mowatt, was a volunteer teacher and member of the Committee. And all the while she went on reading.

At last the season for travel to India came and one day in October 1872 Annette embarked at Gravesend in the steamer *Xantho*. She met for the first time as her cabin companion Mrs. Goldie, going out to visit a newly married daughter in Bengal. She embarked amid the anxious lamentations of Mrs. Aubrey, and with letters of blessing and admiration from like-minded-friends such as Miss Buss, Miss Frances Power Cobbe and Mrs. Bessie Parkes Belloc.<sup>1</sup> She was just under 30.

Annette went through the Suez Canal; it had been opened three years before and she noted that the ship's fee for passage was £785. She made friends with her cabin companion, and heard, without listening much, of the charms of Mrs. Goldie's son-in-law, Henry Beveridge, in Bengal. She noted the fortunate dispensation of Providence which had made both Mrs. Goldie and herself so short that they could find room in the tiny bunks which had fallen to their lot. She played a great deal of chess. She went to service on Sunday, apparently for the sole purpose of helping the singing. She read Shelley to a lovely moon in the

<sup>1</sup> Annette had known Bessie Rayner Parkes before marriage, and later was to occupy her house at 11, Great College Street. Annette's book of photographs includes one of Mrs. Belloc with the infant Marie (Mrs. Belloc Lowndes). Bessie Rayner Parkes was the daughter of Joseph Parkes, the well-known radical leader in Birmingham, and granddaughter of Dr. Priestley. William Akroyd no doubt knew Joseph Parkes, directly and through his Jacobin father in his Birmingham days, and the friendship continued; a letter from Mrs. Belloc to Annette speaks of "your kind good clever Papa" at Stourbridge.

### *India Called Them*

Mediterranean. Whether there was any other listener is not stated. What is certain is that if Annette had desired at once to give up her state of single blessedness she could have done so. But, as she wrote to Fanny, her admirer on the *Xantho* was twenty years older than she, and six weeks' shipboard acquaintance was not in her view sufficient basis for life partnership. Anyhow Miss Akroyd's mind was fixed on her mission to India, and Miss Akroyd was one who valued having her own way in life. She was not one lightly to give up independence.

She reached Calcutta in the middle of December, two days after she had reached the age of 30. She was met by her Indian friends, Mr. and Mrs. Monmohan Ghose and Mr. Gupta, and went to live with the former; they most hospitably placed three rooms at her disposal. She noted duly her first impressions in the Record which she made of her early time in India:

The first features of Calcutta life which have struck me as most curious are the crows, the jackals and the difficulty of taking exercise! This is because I have never realised all these things before, while the servants, the semi and demi-semi clothed people are quite familiar to my imagination.

Annette's first surroundings in Calcutta were Indian, not English. So were her sympathies.

25/3/73.

A tamasha at Belvedere; many Bengalis and a most pleasant evening and altogether picturesque; except for the lurking difficulties in my mind about how far I dare to be polite to my Indian friends!

27/3/73

To Government House, a large party—very nice music—but! This is a country where there is almost always a but! and this but! is of painful dimensions. Day after day as I go into Anglo-Indian society, I am convinced of the falseness of our position here. All allowances made for some little insular prejudice, for we cannot at once get over this narrowness—there is a cruel amount of difficulty and awkwardness between the races. What wonder! I sit among a group of ladies and hear one lisping to a gentleman her complaint that the "natives" come so early, sit downstairs in the ante-room, with their feet on the sofa, i.e. oriental fashion, as if they were at home—(query? who has most right to feel that, the people who pay for the house or those who make them pay?) I hear at Belvedere of

## *A Young Lady Before Her Times*

ladies who say "Ah! no! I never spoke to a native," when asked to help to entertain and talk to some of the numerous Indians present, and of another who said "Let us sit on the verandah to get out of the natives." If this were said of men who have no refined ideas, who were what the Tippoo Sahib princes look, I should not wonder, but when all are classed together—men of learning from whom these empty-hearted women might learn much, and men of proud feelings—I get a sickening heartache and terror of life here. How these sweet and feminine souls, whose sympathy is so tender and sensibilities so acute can be so destitute not only of humanity but of simple courtesy and consideration for the feelings of others, is a problem I cannot pretend to solve.

Coraggio, *we* will have a society and a social life also, and will try to create social enjoyment among ourselves which will give some compensation.

In this spirit, she got to work upon her mission. One of her first callers was naturally K. C. S.—Keshub Chunder Sen—to whom she put the question, "What can I do which will be most helpful?" It had been his speeches in England that had fired her imagination; the first announcement of her coming had been hailed as a triumph for his Indian Reform Association. But there were rifts between Indian Reformers, as there often are between reformers in every field. Some of these rifts became apparent even before Annette left England. She came out untrammelled by bonds to any special body. That meant also that she came without anybody pledged to support her. She found everything to make.

With K. C. S. there soon came a parting. He joined the Committee that was formed to launch her school, but in a few months he resigned; newspapers under his control made violent attacks on Miss Akroyd both before and after the resignation; other papers joined in and there was a *mêlée* of cross correspondence. There is no need to enter into this battle of long ago. Annette almost from her first days in India lost faith in K. C. S. and no doubt she showed this. She met Mrs. Sen and was shocked to find that the wife of the great apostle of women's emancipation in India was ignorant of English and covered by a barbaric display of jewels, playing with them, in Annette's phrase, like a foolish petted child in place of attempting rational converse; a similar contrast between preaching and personal practice was noted later



## *India Called Them*

by other critics of K. C. S., when the reforming opponent of child marriage gave his daughter as a child to be wife to a boy Rajah. Annette was even more shocked by a school in which K. C. S. was interested and by the clothing or absence of clothing of the Indian who taught there; she made an instant note "that in no place with which I am concerned shall any man appear in the dress assumed by Mr. N. Bose."<sup>1</sup>

Finally, Annette went to a public meeting addressed by K. C. S. and recorded her experience as follows:

26/1/73.

At four I went with Durga Mohan Das to an open air meeting of quite the lowest classes in the Bengalee quarter, to hear K. C. S. give an address. There must have been 2,000 people, I guess, and almost all men, indeed I do not think there were three women amongst the crowd, and certainly I was the only lady. In consequence of the unfrequent appearance of a woman the people looked at one with profound amazement, and for the first time I realised how uncivilised are their notions about women. I read it in their eyes, not so much in the eyes of those who looked impertinently at me, for this is an expression not unknown to civilisation! as in the blank wonder with which most of them scrutinized me. . . . K. C. S. looked very imposing, indeed a splendid figure in his white robes and with his graceful and passionate gesture. He spoke of the general attributes of Deity—then rested and then again spoke of practical reforms of life. The people were very attentive and frequently applauded.

I could not but think, the difference between the two men notwithstanding, of Savonarola, and gave a prophetic thought at the future of this man, whose tendencies are surely in a dangerous direction, whose ascetic bias and whose doctrine of original sin will surely land him some day—not in an ordeal of fire, but in an ordeal of disrespect and ridicule. Even now the most educated Brahmos hold aloof or remain with him only as helpers of the good of the Church, which they desire not to diminish by disunion.

"For the first time I realized how uncivilized are their notions about women." This early experience of where women stood in

<sup>1</sup> Annette in her early Indian days was not wholly reasonable about Indian dress. She made another note at the same time about women: "I should urge the adoption of petticoats with the preservation of the remaining upper part of the dress, a compromise thus being effected between indecency and de-nationalization and both secured against." Her sister Fanny, in England, to whom she expounded this project, was wiser and came down on it heavily.

### *A Young Lady Before Her Times*

Indian society had a profound and lasting effect on Annette's mind. She did not as a result sympathize any more with what she had described as the Anglo-Indian attitude of most of her English sisters. But she began to feel less in sympathy with the generality of Indian men. And the emptiness of mind and life of most Indian women was emphasized to her, each time that in these first years she got away to English women friends to whom books and ideas were as real as to herself. Bedford College was not a good preparation for India.

K. C. S. left Annette's Committee, but the Committee went on. Annette had firm Indian friends, in her hosts the Monmohan Ghoses (though she was to be warned against them later as too completely Anglicized), in Durga Mohan Das, a distinguished pleader, in the bountiful Maharani Surnamoye. She found towers of unfailing support in Mr. Justice Phear and Mrs. Phear. But it was all slow uphill work, first to raise enough money to make a start; then to make sure of pupils and teachers; then to find and furnish a house suitable for the school. The house chosen finally in Baniapookur Lane was at least the third that Annette had inspected.

Quite apart from the unpleasantness with K. C. S., Annette found her mission to Indian women becoming a drab affair of spoons and forks and filters, and drunken landlords and absconding servants:

March 1873.

Early came Dr. Sarna with good practical suggestions about the house and with a dreadful energy of argument about spoons and forks; he left my brain as though rasped by a file.

May.

Committee meeting at which we decided that we must have another hundred rupees per month before commencing.

June.

What a time of misery have I passed.

October.

Today to meet our landlord by appointment at 22, Baniapookur Lane, and for the third time he did not come. Mrs. Knight had gone with me, as Mr. Ghose and Durga M. Babu were both away and I am so unused to these men's peculiar ways. We then went to the

### *India Called Them*

landlord's house, by a dreadful lane full of ditches and right-angled turnings, and found him quite intoxicated. However we talked to him and he talked about my "Idle object." This however did not prevent us from expressing our opinion as to the state of the house, which is painted and whitewashed on one side only—not the back of course—and where the godowns are untouched, though we are going to pay R. 10 per month extra in consideration of the repairs. Certainly one wants courage here! I hear that the only plan is to go in and stop the rent till the repairs are done.

November.

Still without any teachers and singlehanded.

January 1874.

Not able to get out as there was no one to leave in charge.

April.

All the servants absented themselves in the evening.

Still, the school did get established: the Hindu Mahila Bidyalaya (Hindu Ladies School)—on November 18, 1873. That was the day on which Annette, having at last collected a Pundit and a second Mistress to share her labours, moved into 22, Baniapookur Lane, with some dozen pupils.

At home in East Worcestershire her local paper—the *Brierley Hill Advertiser*—was able to rejoice:

#### MISS A. AKROYD IN INDIA

Among the most hopeful plans for the social regeneration of India is that for the education of the women of India. An experimental effort in this direction has been projected by Miss Annette Akroyd (daughter of the late Mr. William Akroyd, of Parkfield, Stourbridge), who is generously throwing herself into the work with all the characteristic energy and self-devotedness of her father, and with a like faith in the elevating influences of education. . . .

Miss Akroyd has formed a school for Hindoo ladies. The general committee is strong in both European and native members of standing. The object of the school "is to give thorough instruction on principles of the strictest theological neutrality. The subjects taught are arithmetic, physical and political geography, the elements of physical science, Bengali and English reading, grammar and writing, history, and needlework." Great attention is to be given to the training of the pupils in practical housework, and to the formation of orderly and industrious habits.

### *A Young Lady Before Her Times*

Annette's rejoicing must have been more sober than her landlord's. But she stuck it out through the heat of two years in Calcutta, on her first visit to India.

She sent her news regularly to her sister Fanny in London and received news in return. The Working Women's College went through a crisis which led to departure from it both of Fanny as Lady Superintendent and of James Mowatt as member of the committee. The crisis in the Working Women's College was of a familiar type. It seemed to one section of the committee that they would be more successful in attracting women students if they did not exclude men students. The co-educationists had their way, and Fanny and James, who had stood for women only, both left the college. But as they agreed to go together and get married, all was well for them. James, the son of rich conventional and doting parents, was liberal and unselfish in spite of it; a typical member of the Reform Club of those days; a barrister who had no need for briefs. Annette welcomed him as a brother-in-law with open arms.

In Calcutta, even in these two years, every now and again she escaped to friends, once to an "idle week of French novels and delightful society and drives" with the Hobhouses; once to the hill-station of Naini Tal with the Phears.

We were very idle and came to the end of our literature. I read Sophocles, Aeschylus, Browning's *Alcestis*, Prosper Mérimée's *Lettres à une Inconnue*, Trollope's *Belton Estate*.

These were fleeting interludes. She was fixed to Baniapookur Lane. There, after two years' struggle, she was with fourteen pupils when her year of fate, 1875, began.

*I am nothing if not impulsive.*

Henry to Annette, March 13, 1875.

*It was a curious chance which married us, was it not?  
Sceptics in many things we had somehow an increasing  
faith in one another.*

Annette to Henry, October 15, 1879.

## Chapter VII

### ACT III OF 1872

**H**ENRY BEVERIDGE with his Indian sympathies, his love of learning and his breach with established religion was a predestined supporter of Miss Akroyd's school. She had already a point of contact with him; the Mr. Gupta who had taught her Bengali in London was the Krishna Govinda Gupta whom Henry had befriended as a child wishing to see a procession, and who soon after Henry's return to Barisal was sent there as a junior civilian. Annette might have met Henry even if she had not shared a cabin with Mrs. Goldie on the *Xantho*. But through Mrs. Goldie she met him at once, at a moment when his world was empty. She enlisted him in her crusade. She knew and shared his attitude on Indian problems.

On the day after their first meeting she recorded a tale of Mr. Beveridge told her by an Indian friend, of how the Europeans had placed constables on a pier at Barisal to prevent natives from walking on it on a particular occasion; of how, when later a bill for repairs to the bridge came before the town council, a native gentleman had protested, and Mr. Beveridge as Chairman had supported the protest; of how after a great deal of angry talk, the English judge had accepted the view of Mr. Beveridge that if the Europeans wanted to keep the pier for themselves they ought themselves to pay for its repairs.

Mr. Beveridge, with a mother, brother and sister to support at home, had certainly no money to spare. But he became one of the larger donors—with Rs. 100—in the first list of supporters of Miss Akroyd's school, and later he promised a regular subscription of ten rupees a month. He was stationed six days' journey from Calcutta and seldom came there, but he joined the Managing Committee of the school; there can be little doubt that he enlisted yet another member of the committee, Wilfred Heeley, the great friend to whom he attributed the formation of his opinions on matters of religion. Mr. Beveridge began also very soon to write to Miss Akroyd about her project.

## *India Called Them*

Barisal, 13/3/73.

My dear Miss Akroyd,

I have not yet heard from Mrs. Goldie and I have not had an opportunity of speaking to many natives about the Boarding School. I therefore only write a few lines to say that I have not forgotten the subject and that I will do what I can to assist in the matter. I arrived here on Saturday last and have ever since been very busy with District work. I called on Mrs. Gupta yesterday and found her as quiet as ever. They have bought a pony carriage which I hope will add something to their comfort.

I am very quiet here and feel very lonely when coming back after cutcherry to this big, dreary house when there is no longer anyone to meet me. However, I feel that I was right to return and will trust to time to soften my sorrow. Mr. Heeley was here for a day or two, but has now gone to Noakhali. He seems very uncertain as to Mr. Campbell's views about education, and I think you are right in proceeding gradually with your scheme and in cultivating patience. There is no doubt that the idea of a Boarding-School is both novel and good and I am confident that you will be successful in time. The real difficulty is the money one, and this can only be overcome by donations in the first instance. Eventually the school may pay its way, but there must be a heavy outlay at first. The besetting sin of Bengalees is that they will think and talk and think for ever but that they will not act. But then that is the very reason we are here, for if Bengalees could only act half as well as they talk there would be no need for us westerns to rule over them. We must, therefore, take them as we find them and do our best for them.

I hope you enjoyed your evening at the Sailors' Home. Calcutta is a terribly bad place for sailors, and indeed I begin to think that every European in India is more or less in a false position. That is I think as regards his or her happiness, unless the higher blessedness of feeling that one is doing good comes in as a compensation. The longer you stay in the country the more you will feel that at heart the natives fear and dislike us and that they look with suspicion on all our schemes even when they really are for their benefit. You will feel too that their dislike and distrust of us are reasonable and that it will be long before they are removed or even mitigated. Not all the bells in all our churches will ring out the darkness of the land nor ring in the common love of good.

The bells that will do that have yet to be cast and the voice of their chimes will not be heard by us. I am not writing to discourage you and I hope that you will not think I am taking a desponding view of

### *Act III of 1872*

your enterprise. I believe that you will do good and you are undoubtedly on the right track. But I cannot help feeling a little melancholy just now, though at the same time I do not abate one jot of hope.

Kindly remember me to Mr. and Mrs. Ghose and with kind regards to yourself,

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

H. Beveridge.

2/4/73.

. . . I have delayed writing you until pay-day in order that I might send you my contribution. I now enclose the first half of a note for Rs. 100 and will send you the other half on hearing from you. I am glad to hear that your prospects of boarders are so good. There has been no meeting in Barisal about your school, and I am afraid no pupils will come from here. Some persons are trying to establish a girls' school in this place but I have not heard that they have had any success yet. A few subscriptions might be collected here but the amount would be but small and it would take time to get them in. I think your school must be fairly started before they will come forward.

I had a letter from Mrs. Goldie from Aden. Poor lady, she is evidently very dull and lonely and is I am afraid feeling the bitterness of her loss more than ever. I am going off to-morrow morning into the District and will probably remain out for a fortnight or three weeks. I do not like to stay in this house and I have more time to myself when away from Head-quarters. . . .

This method of sending money to Annette, by half a bank-note in one envelope followed by the other half later, was one which Henry was to use often in later years. The loss of Mrs. Goldie's for which he expressed his sympathy was the loss to Henry of his own girl-wife and baby.

24/5/73.

. . . I have been a good while in answering your last letter for I have been very busy with annual reports. I have also been engaged in a grand passage of arms with my Judge arising out of that singular case which I mentioned to you. The Judge could not or would not see that the men were innocent and would neither release them nor report for their release. So I took the matter into my own hands and provisionally discharged them, for which I have very properly been



### *India Called Them*

censured by Govt. The case is now before the High Court and I suppose it will end in the men's being released.

I see you have broken with Keshub Chunder Sen. I expect he is too fluent a speaker to be a great doer. I am glad to see that your Boarding School is being taken notice of in the papers and I hope that things are going on favourably. There are always lions in the way of doing anything good, and the British lion is perhaps the worst of all such beasts for he sits with his tail spread right across the road and refuses to budge.

The "singular case" referred to was described at length later by Henry in an Appendix to his *History of Bakarganj*. In the course of a dispute about the division of sesame seeds, a peasant—one Jabar Ula—had been beaten up by two of his neighbours; his widow and mother gave a circumstantial account of how, after lying insensible for two days, he had died, and how, to conceal the evidence, his assailants had broken into his house and carried away the corpse. The assailants under investigation confessed the truth of the widow's account, adding the corroborative detail that they had rowed the body out in a small rowing boat and flung it into the middle of the Meghna river, at that point two or three miles wide. They were naturally committed for trial, but before the trial came on they changed their minds, withdrew their confession and declared that Jabar Ula was alive. In the trial itself, on the advice of their counsel, they changed again, acknowledged the truth of their original confession, pleaded guilty but pleaded provocation; Jabar Ula was declared, in the course of the sesame seed dispute, to have twitched her upper garment off their sister. The judge at the trial took a lenient view: as the body could not be found, he acquitted of murder, but sent the two men to prison for six months on account of assault, and another six months for concealment of evidence by throwing the body into the river. The men accepted the sentence without appeal and went to jail. When they had been there seven or eight months Jabar Ula appeared alive and well in another village, and, being recognized, added his share of unconvincing corroborative detail, of how he had awaked from insensibility after his beating to find himself lying on the river bank with a jackal gnawing him, and had fled and hidden in fear of a further assault. The general and no doubt right opinion was

### *Act III of 1872*

that Jabar Ula had been seeking revenge for his thrashing by getting his assailants accused of his murder.

To this account of Jabar Ula's case Henry, who had been the magistrate at the first investigation and confession, though not the judge in the trial, added a note of his own action.

It seems proper to add that I was so convinced of the innocence of the prisoners in this case that I took upon myself to release them in anticipation of the orders of Government. For this irregularity I was deservedly censured, and three Judges of the High Court afterwards decided that there was no ground to interfere with the original conviction. However the prisoners were not represented before the High Court and there is no doubt that the general opinion in the district is that Jabar Ula never was flung into the river.

The story of Jabar Ula is typical of many things: of the sandy skeins of lies from which it was Henry's task for thirty-five years to try to weave justice in Bengal, and of Henry's own attitude to his task and to authority.

Miss Akroyd, as this letter shows, was getting into troubles on her own account, and Henry offered to help her. The idea expressed by him in his next letter that he had learned to be diplomatic, is like Colonel Newcome's idea that he knew the ways of the world.

Barisal, 9/6/73.

I have no doubt that your experiences of the Brahmos have been painful ones. I have not seen any of the correspondence except your first letters as my Englishman does not follow me into the Mofussil. I fancy Keshub is a good man but the leader of a party is always to a certain extent its slave. I begin to doubt the efficiency of any religion or form of thought however pure to alter private characters or national characteristics. Truth and straightforwardness are not Oriental virtues and I fancy there will always be a secret preference in the Bengali mind for the milder virtues such as patience, and charity (alms-giving). They probably admire St. John more than St. Paul or the somewhat brusque St. Peter. The great Ram Mohun Rai, they tell me, took bribes when he was in Govt. employ and had a Mahomedan mistress. Of course you will not find any notice of this in Miss Carpenter's "Last Days" and I do not suppose that these vices clung to him through life nor do I doubt that he really was a great and good man. However, I venture to suggest to

### *India Called Them*

you as a matter of policy that you should keep in as far as possible with Keshub and his party. He has great influence and we have an apostolic precept for being all things to all men.

Perhaps this may shock you and you may think that I have lived so long among Bengalis that I have learned their ways. Perhaps I have, for one can't be a Magistrate for a number of years without learning, or at least trying to learn to be diplomatic. I am very glad that you are likely to begin work soon and wish you every success.

I have heard nothing more of my case but I presume that something will come of it soon. I do not pretend to say that censure from Govt. is not unpleasant and I really have a high opinion of Sir George Campbell's ability and desire to do good. I have, therefore, some reverence for his blame in this case and quite admit that I deserved censure and that another Lieutenant-Governor might not have let me off so easily. At the same time I won't say that I was wrong or that I would not do something of the same kind again if I felt called upon to do it. It may be a paradox but there are some occasions when you do right and yet deserve punishment. For instance a man whose child is starving is right to steal for it if he cannot get food for it otherwise. But the judge is also right in punishing him for the theft. So also a soldier should perhaps not fight in a war which he believes to be unjust, but his Commander is also right in shooting him for disobeying orders.

28/11/73.

I see among the list of unclaimed letters at the Calcutta post office that there is one addressed to you. You had better send for it.

I have been thinking somewhat about your breach with Keshub Chunder Sen. I think that if it could be made up it would be advantageous to your school and if you like I will write a letter to the *Indian Mirror* or even to the great Keshub himself recommending an adjustment of the difference. I hope you will excuse me for saying this. My only motives are admiration of your project and a desire that it should succeed. I believe that Keshub Babu really is a good man and if he is so he will respond to an appeal for reunion.

May I venture to say that there is a danger in your being too much identified with the anglicised Bengalees. What I said about the Bengali character applies to them as well as to the Brahmins. I have nothing to say against Mr. and Mrs. Ghose, who were kind to me, but I do not believe that they represent the best section of young Bengal or that Bengal will eventually follow in the track that they are going. Doorga Mohan is, I believe, a thoroughly honest man, and he is not I think an anglicised Bengali. We have not got to understand the

### *Act III of 1872*

Bengalees yet. Like, I believe, the Italians, they are both more polite and more rude and plain-spoken than we are.

I hope I have not said too much. I haven't written without consideration but still I am aware that I do not know the outs and ins of the controversy and that I may be altogether wrong in my views. The gist of what I want to say is that I hope you will get the benefit of the counsel of some calm and philanthropic Englishman, such for instance as my friend Mr. Heeley or probably Mr. Phear (I say probably because I know very little of him), and that you will not take the views unreservedly of any Bengalee, however intelligent and honest. Mr. Ghose is no doubt an honest man but he has cast in his lot with the anglicised Bengalees and may therefore unintentionally mislead you. I do not suppose he has ever made such sacrifices for his convictions as Keshub Babu has. If I were to write to the *Indian Mirror* I would, of course, sign my name. I rather dread the task, however, and will not undertake it unless you think it might do good. I don't want you to carry the olive branch to Keshub. Both as a lady and an Englishwoman and also as one who has made sacrifices you are entitled to be met half way. But I think without any sacrifice of dignity you might go the other half.

If this letter makes you angry do not mind telling me so, for I am very likely all wrong in my notion. . . .

Miss Akroyd apparently did not welcome mediation with Keshub or open championship by Henry. But he supported her at one stage of her controversy by a letter to the Press signed I. C. S. and he kept on writing to her once a month or so—promising a subscription, congratulating her on the opening of the school, suggesting that it be called the Akroyd School, saying something about himself and his opinions.

9/12/73.

. . . It is drawing near to Christmas time but that is always a sad season in India and is doubly so to me now. I have got to the end of my religious doubts and fears for a while at least and have struck what Brer Harte calls the bed-rock. It is hard this same bed-rock, but I welcome it for that, for I was wearied and overworn with the grasping of shadows and the sinking in boggy mud.

It is not Comtism altogether for the great Comte is a little too French for me, but it is Humanity taking the place of Divinity and an abandonment of everything that seems non-natural. How long this will remain I know not, but if it does remain it may in time

### *India Called Them*

become philosophic calm and the wise indifference of the wise to everything that is unknown and unknowable.

The answers to these letters, if any, have been lost, and they were not all answered. Miss Akroyd was getting absorbed in the dusty struggle of her school. Henry settled down to his solitary round and his *History of Bakarganj*. For more than a year he stopped writing to Miss Akroyd, but he kept on rather sadly to his mother. His brother Allie who, after the Abyssinian campaign, had still been abroad when Henry went to claim Jeanie, had returned home, and in June 1873 married a cousin from the rich branch of the House of B. in Dunfermline—Elizabeth or Libbie, daughter of Erskine the first.

Barisal, 6/5/73.

I am glad to see that Mrs. Goldie has arrived safely. Poor lady, it must have been a sore trial to her to return home with such melancholy tidings. . . .

You do not give me any news of Allie's marriage. When is it coming off?

13/6/73.

I often see Scotland again now in my waking visions and can say with your friend Horace

An me ludit amabilis  
Insania audire et videor pias  
Errare per lucos, amoenae  
Quas et aquae subeunt et aerae

Pretty well this for an adust Police-Magistrate who has to jabber Bengali six or seven hours every day with the artful dodgers of Barisal. What of Allie's marriage? . . .

10/7/73.

The story of our lives from week to week does not contain much that is new. . . .

Tell David I have bought Conington's Virgil. He points out that the Eclogues are altogether imitations and that the scenery is entirely Sicilian and not Mantuan. I might have remembered that myself for Mantua lies in a plain and has no *damnosa rupes*, etc. The Georgics are more true to nature and there is a *flatness* about them which corresponds to the plains which they describe. I see that they say that Virgil's real name was Vergil.

### *Act III of 1872*

I wonder how the marriage has gone off. . . .

Perozpur, 26/4/74.

I have come down here for a couple of days to inspect the Sub-Division and to get a change from Barisal. . . . Many thanks for Principal Caird's sermons. I have been reading the *Thoughts of Marcus Antoninus* (Bohn Translation). Some of these are very good but the Translator is hardly correct when he says that they contain no traces of stoical arrogance or self-sufficiency. For instance, Marcus Antoninus bids you to be always the same whether well or ill which is simply an impossibility.

Barisal, 24/7/74.

I was glad to hear from you and Maggie last week. I like your sentiment about a Scottish heart and a Scottish spirit and hope to shew myself a chip of the old block. Unfortunately life is so monotonous, there is so little opportunity for dash and enterprise that one almost wishes for an earthquake or another mutiny just to show what one could do.

I am going off to Dacca next month to make my bow to the Viceroy who is to hold a Darbar there. I shall be glad to have an opportunity of showing my respect for Lord Northbrook, but I don't care for the illuminations, etc.

I am glad to hear that you were over at the Baptism. The family is now perpetuated I hope.

The baptism was that of his brother Allie's first boy. Henry, the most unselfish of human-kind, was able in his solitude and misery to be glad of this, as in another letter he had dwelt on Mrs. Goldie's loss rather than his own.

By the end of 1874 Henry became entitled to furlough again. He planned to go home, and as that would take him by Calcutta he had an excuse for writing to Miss Akroyd.

Barisal,  
Christmas Day, 1874.

I wrote to you a long while ago but I suppose you have been busy for I never got any reply. I was reminded of you yesterday by seeing your photograph in Mr. Gupta's album. . . .

I have applied for furlough but have not got it yet, and even if I do I do not intend going home for two or three months yet. I am trying to write a history of Bakarganj and must therefore stay on here and collect materials. I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you

### *India Called Them*

when I come down to Calcutta. I was down in Calcutta for a day in August last but as I had no fitting costume I did not call on you.

Henry's visit to Calcutta seems to have been delayed till February. On Valentine's Day, 1875, he appears again—for the fourth time—in Annette's diary:

Neuralgia, very unwell. Mr. Beveridge called to see me.

He appears for the fifth time on March 3:

Mr. Beveridge came and visited the school.

Eight days later, on Thursday, March 11, he came into the open:

March 11th. Mr. Beveridge spent tiffin with me and wrote asking to call at the same hour next day but arrived at seven in the morning and also came in the evening for a drive.

He had planned to make his proposal on the Friday afternoon, but found that he could not wait. So Annette was called from her breakfast and her newspaper to hear him. She did not accept him at once. On the Friday of the drive and the day after, Henry wrote two more letters to Annette, addressing her for the last time as Miss Akroyd. He was staying with a friend, Mrs. Stuart, in 4, Kyd Street. She was at her school in Baniapookur Lane.

4, Kyd Street, Friday [12/3/75].

My dearest Miss Akroyd,

Perhaps you would like to see my Album so I beg leave to send it to you. I feel how very unworthy I am of you and I know that I have many faults which you will not be long in discovering. Indeed I hope you have discovered them already, for then I shall know that you like me even with my faults.

I try to be honest and truthful but perhaps this makes me sometimes hard and severe, and I have to boot a lot of wayward impulses which greatly require guiding. I trust that you will give me this guiding and that my love and esteem for you may make me better. I am not at all disappointed at your not saying Yes to me and I am very grateful for your not having said No. I earnestly wish that you will not hurry yourself and that you will take full time to make enquiries and to consider the matter on every side, for I well know what a momentous step marriage is. Be assured therefore that I will not press you to give me an answer at once.

*Act III of 1872*

If you do eventually say Yes, you might come home in June or July and then we could be married at home, and come out together next cold weather. Or I could come out again for you.

Yours affectionately,  
H. Beveridge.

4 Kyd Street,  
13 March 1875.

My dearest Miss Akroyd,

Many thanks for your kind note. I want you exactly to understand my feeling and also your own and yet I feel it difficult to say or write the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. When my dear wife died I said to myself that I never would marry again and I have often said so since both to myself and to my friends. I found however as time went on that I really was not strong enough to stand alone and that I ran the danger of making shipwreck from trying to carry on a resolution beyond my strength. Not, I think, that I would be driven to dissipation but that I was getting rudderless as it were, and found solitude insupportable and was becoming soured and misanthropic. People have told me that no one can or ought to marry a second wife until he has forgotten his first wife. I do not believe this, and I must frankly say that if it be so I never can marry again. I never can forget my lost Darling, nor can I ever feel to another woman exactly as I felt and still feel towards her. She was one of the purest and gentlest and loveliest of women and I felt for her a protecting tenderness which I could not feel towards an equal or a superior and which of course the latter would not require. As I used to say to Jeannie sometimes when she would wish for a child, I don't need one for you are my wife and daughter in one. My great exemplar John Stuart Mill says that all marriages except between persons of about equal age and equal knowledge are relics of barbarism. I have often thought of this saying, and am convinced that it is true and yet what I feel is that I am a barbarian and the descendant of barbarians, and that perhaps I never can get quite rid of my barbaric nature. Mill's own experience also has somewhat staggered me and has made me doubt if he too was not subject to blindness and was not less calm and strong than he thought himself. I am almost certain that he was under a delusion as regards Mrs. Taylor and I cannot but think that his conduct and that of Mrs. Taylor was morally wrong and destructive to society. He says Mrs. Taylor had a sincere affection for her husband and that he was a most honourable, brave and sincere man and that his only deficiency was a



### *India Called Them*

want of literary and scientific tastes and aspirations, so that he was not a fit companion for her. Surely this is heartless and priggish talk. Ought not her affection for an honourable and brave man and the father of her child to have prevented her from embittering his last years (as a writer in *Frazer's Magazine* says she did) by withdrawing herself from him and by consorting and travelling about and all but living with another man? And I cannot but think that Mill's love for such a woman and his rhapsodies about her were—not perhaps a relic of barbarism, but something worse because less excusable, namely a proof of a certain amount of fatuity and a species of dotage. And what seems to me to prove that Mill was subject to delusion in the matter is his thinking that he could induce the world to believe that Mrs. Taylor was Carlyle, Shelley, Mill, Comte, etc., all in one by his saying that she was so. He tells us that one chief object in writing his autobiography was to make known to the world his obligations to his father and his wife. Now we believe what he says of his father because we can read his father's books and see his talents and virtues. But we have no such confirmation in the case of Mrs. Taylor, and could not Mill have had the common sense to see that when he told the world about his wife's wonderful qualities the world would only laugh at him and her and say that he raved quite as badly and much less attractively than any boy-lover ever did? His book therefore has quite failed of its main object and being a blunder must be pronounced a proof of weakness. His step-daughter seems to have had more wit than he for she has laid sacrilegious hands on his manuscript and struck out some passages about herself. It is amusing to see how clear-sighted he was about Comte. Comte was, he tells us, misled by his admiration for his Pauline, but he never seems to have thought that he could have a beam in his own eye.

To come back to ourselves, you may say that I should not have spoken to you as I did and should have waited until I knew more of you and had reflected more on the matter. Perhaps I should, but I am nothing if not impulsive and besides I thought that it was better to make some declaration before leaving India and while there was yet some little time for personal intercourse. Letters are very well but they do not supply the place of explanations made face to face.

I cannot hold out any promise of a brilliant future to you if you marry me. I don't think I shall ever get much higher in the service than I now am, and I shall always I fear be at daggers drawn with some of my superiors and will always be looked upon as an unsafe man. I have also a mother, a brother and a sister to support, and I must devote a good deal of my income to charitable uses. I am also

### *Act III of 1872*

resolved to stick to India and probably that most unpopular part of it—Eastern Bengal. I therefore cannot promise you a lively or pleasant station in the Mofussil though I do not think I am called upon to go back to Barisal.

You see that as Tennyson calls it, it is but an imperfect gift I bring. If you will accept it I shall be glad, but I would rather that you should not accept it in ignorance of its imperfections. Do not therefore, I repeat, hurry yourself in the matter. I can wait.

The steamer leaves on Tuesday morning and I believe we are to go on board on Monday night after dinner. If there are any questions which you wish to ask me about myself or my relations please do so.

Yours affectionately,

H. Beveridge.

Letters, as Henry said, are very well, but they do not supply the place of explanations made face to face. Nor have they the same effects. When he made his proposal, Henry was on the point of sailing for home, with his passage booked. But having sent his letter of the 13th by hand he followed it by a visit in which rather less was said about Mrs. Taylor and rather more about "ourselves." As the faithful recorder Annette noted later in her diary, while sitting with Henry on the west coast of Scotland, "on the 13th March the answer to the question put to me on the 12th was taken for granted in the affirmative." Henry had deceived himself in thinking that he could wait. The 13th of March decided that Henry's and Annette's lives should join.

This was an unusual courtship between two unusual people. Neither of them was any longer quite young—Henry 38, Annette 32. Each had a strong character and obstinately held opinions. They had met exactly five times before Henry declared himself. Henry had in his mind his never-forgotten Jeanie. Annette till then, as she wrote to him afterwards (and she was a truthful person), had feelings which had made her look almost contemptuously on all other opportunities of marriage. Her mission to India, indeed, had come to be exhausting toil, which lit no spreading flame. But marriage was not her only escape.

Annette always used to maintain that she had never felt for Henry before marriage anything like the love that came later. This is borne out by her letters. She was to write many love letters to him, but they came after marriage. What she wrote to

### *India Called Them*

him as a suitor seems curiously stilted when compared with what he wrote then or she wrote later. She addressed him as "Most impracticable of people." Sometimes she did not address him at all—sent him letters like minutes without opening or loving subscription. She refused to go to a party with him without a chaperone. Six days after her engagement she begged not to have to see Henry for a day or two.

I cannot at all realise with my brains what I have done in promising to be your wife, and I am inclined to appeal to your tenderness for me and find me two or three quiet days to put the notion into its proper place among the realities of my existence.

One of Annette's troubles was that at her school she was in full-time fractious employment in a depressing climate.

I was very stupid last night in a cloud of neuralgia and quinine and will not go out anywhere again when I am so tired. Do you know that I think it very fatiguing to be engaged to be married in addition to teaching English.

Henry, on the other hand, was on leave, with nothing to occupy his time except seeing and writing to Annette. She had an immediate introduction to Henry as a volcano in perpetual eruption of happy thoughts and changing plans. The one fixed point was that he was in a tearing haste.

Henry insisted on being married practically at once. Annette put up a gallant but unavailing fight to be allowed the decency of one month of public engagement before marriage. She only just managed to assert her claim to name the day of the wedding, and that only after Henry had practically fixed the day of their sailing together for home.

Henry, mindful of his father's financial crash, insisted that Annette's money from her father should be secured against his own depredations. A marriage settlement had to be made, and trustees discovered at short notice. Annette called as of right on two old friends of her father and for a third on the new friend and brother-in-law, James Mowatt, whom she had gained through her sister's marriage. This last choice led to many troubles in the end.

Henry insisted on not going to church in Calcutta. Only a year or two before had it been made possible for Europeans in India to be married otherwise. By Act III of 1872, the Governor-

### *Act III of 1872*

General and Legislative Council had provided a form of civil marriage before a Registrar; out of regard to religious susceptibilities they had limited this form of marriage to couples ready to declare that neither of them professed "the Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muhammadan, Parsi, Buddhist, Sikh or Jaina religion." Henry jumped at the chance of making such a declaration. Annette put up a fight against some features of this alternative procedure, but in the end she surrendered.

All this, up to the marriage on April 6 under Act III of 1872, is told best in a selection from Henry's daily or thrice daily letters of this period.

4 Kyd Street,  
Monday morning, 15th March/75.

My Darling Annette,

I am longing for eight o'clock and the prospect of seeing you then. Come earlier if possible and come right into the Court Yard and under the Portico, as I want you to come up into the drawing-room. There will be no one there but ourselves and I have many things to say to you. But first I must tell you that I am not going home to-morrow morning nor next month either for the matter of that unless you go with me as my wife. I do not think that you can have any unsurmountable objection to marrying me in Calcutta and what I propose is that we should get married in the course of a fortnight and then go home in the French steamer of the next month. I am quite miserable at the thought of going on board all alone and of feeling that every revolution of the steamer's screw was carrying me farther from you.

I am sure the Committee would listen to reason if we arranged to marry here and your friends and pupils would be delighted. Mr. Phear and Mr. Hobhouse will be able to expound the law on the subject so that there will be no room to doubt that the knot is not properly tied. Besides if we go off, I to-morrow and you next month, people will say that we are running away and are afraid to face the opinion of the Calcutta public about not being married in a church.

Now be your own dear self and do not be misled by mistaken notions of duty to your school or of the propriety of being married in London and

Believe me,  
Your loving Henry.

P.S. I love you more and more every day and would like you to destroy that letter of mine about the imperfect gift.

### *India Called Them*

But Annette did not destroy "that letter." She kept it as she kept everything else from Henry, with a few deliberate exceptions, for more than fifty years.

4 Kyd Street.  
Tuesday morning.  
[16/3/75]

My Darling,

You were very wicked last night and did not sing or do anything else that you ought to have done and if it had not been for a little sparkling ring that I saw on your finger I might have fancied that you meant to throw me over. I therefore beg leave to inform you that we are to be married on the 31st March (Wednesday) at No. 1 Old Ballygunge and probably at 8 a.m. After the marriage we will proceed to Chandernagore and stay there for a week or so and if we can get reserved accommodation in the French Steamer we will go home in her on the 13th April. . . . I am going to-day to give notice of our intended marriage to the Registrar as fourteen days notice is required.

I shall feel obliged by your getting together some particulars about your property as we must have a marriage-settlement and secure your property to yourself and your children. It is very provoking that so much formality has to be gone through but if a young lady has been born under such an evil star as to have means of her own she must take the consequences.

4 Kyd Street,  
17th March, 1875.

My Darling,

I had a very pleasant walk home last night in the moonlight and I had a good sleep afterwards and another walk this morning. I am therefore quite composed and judicial-minded and am not going to be unsafe or restless any more. I hope that you too, my Darling, had a good sleep.

Now to proceed to details, I beg leave to inform you that I am going down this morning at 10 to take our passage in a reserved cabin in the *Surat* which will start on the morning of the 8th prox. Our marriage must take place before that date and I would suggest that it should occur a day or two at least previous to the ship's sailing, as we all know that ship life is never quite comfortable. We cannot be married earlier than the 30th and I have suggested the 31st but I quite admit your right to fix the day, and I bow to your discretion

### *Act III of 1872*

in the matter. Of course the earlier we are married the better it will be in my opinion for then we will have more time to fall into one another's ways before undergoing the trials of ship life, etc.

I have been thinking about the place of celebrating the marriage and I have come to the conclusion that the right and straightforward thing is to be married in the Registrar's Office in Larkins Lane. I don't want to receive any favour from I. N. J., and I think it but right that you and I should accept the disagreeables as well as the advantages of holding our views. On account of the heat I think we should be married at 5.30 or 6 p.m., and if you are agreeable on the 31st. After the marriage we would go to Ballygunge and then I hope Mrs. Phear would give a dinner to us and such friends as might wish to come, etc.

Dinner over and your speech made might not we drive to Barrackpur? The drive is a beautiful one and we would have Moonlight. At Barrackpur there is I believe a Boarding House and we might have rooms engaged there beforehand and might stay there for a day or two. Thereafter we could return to Calcutta and if Mrs. Phear would be so kind as to receive us we might stay in her house till the 8th.

Please think over all these matters and discuss them with Mrs. Phear. I don't fancy Chandernagore. It is commonplace to go there, and besides all the scoundrels of Calcutta take refuge there. I hope Mrs. Phear will allow your girls to meet at her house when we return from the Registrar's Office. You will be at Ballygunge at about 5 p.m. and let me hear your views. Kindly understand that there are only two or three points which I think are fixed and that the decision of the others depends on you and your friends. The points fixed are 1st—that we are to be married;

2nd—that we are to be married in the Registrar's Office;

3rd—that we are to go home in the steamer of the 8th April and that the marriage must take place between the 30th March and the 8th April.

You can show this letter to Mrs. Phear if you like.

Your loving husband

in prospect and in accordance with the  
provisions of Act III of 1872.

Annette's reaction to this three-point ultimatum was spirited. She had three fixed points of her own and only the first one was the same as Henry's. Her answer led to a five-sheet letter from Henry on the following day, which admitted her right to be married on April 13th rather than March 31st if she chose, or even to be married at home rather than in India if she insisted, but went on to argue the case for not minding an appearance

### *India Called Them*

before a native Registrar. "We are in a Bengali country and must try to school ourselves into seeing Bengalis in office and yielding them the submission due to their office." To try to insist on a special appointment of a white Registrar would be "an insult to the Bengali nation." The actual Registrar was white-haired, spectacled, and Mahomedan-Cadi-looking, a good simple-minded old man who would be far more frightened of Annette than she could possibly be of him; the public would be cleared from the room and the whole affair would take only ten minutes. "You can go down in the Phears' closed carriage. I am so proud and happy for the marriage that I have no shyness whatever and will go down to the office in an open carriage if need be."

To this persuasion Annette yielded about the Registrar and, having done so, stood firm against a last-minute assault on her feelings by her friend and hostess Mrs. Phear trying to persuade her that marriage not in church was shocking. But she insisted on going to "that place" for the "unhappy ceremony" in a muslin dress. She kept her wedding dress for the dinner-party that was to follow at the Phears' house in the evening. On the question of date there was in due course an honourable compromise. After Henry had accepted April 13th in place of March 31st, while pointing out sadly that there would be no moon for the wedding drive to Serampur, Annette relented. April 6th was fixed and held to.

The course of true love began to flow clear again. Henry discovered and enjoyed Annette's other name of Susannah; forecast rightly that the question of earrings for Annette—he wanted them and she did not—would be a fine subject of argument later; wrote nonsense about his wedding costume which in touching allusion to his hero the great John Stuart Mill was to have large brass buttons with windmills engraved upon them; and revealed his knowledge, derived from Mrs. Goldie, that Annette had had a proposal from a fellow-passenger in the *Xantho*. He revealed also how he had thought about Annette in his two sad years at Barisal; he wrote about Jeanie; he criticized as unutterable twaddle a book which Annette had lent him; he agreed with Annette's expressed intention of calling herself in future Akroyd-Beveridge (though in the end she never

### *Act III of 1872*

did so); he began from the beginning his life-long practice of writing to Annette whatever at any moment was uppermost in his mind.

20/3/75.

. . . Do you know I begin quite to like the name Susannah and think of calling you by it. There is something Eastern and queenly about it and doesn't it mean the Lily? I used to call you the Pearl of the Merchant's Tank but it would be more appropriate and quite as poetical to translate the Susannah of Baniapookur into the Lily of the Pool of the Spice-Merchants. Don't Baniases deal in spices chiefly? Ask Binodini if she approves of this name for you. . . .

20/3/75.

. . . I will confess to still feeling slightly angry at Mrs. Phear for trying as I think to come between us and nearly making mischief. One feature of my character, whether amiable or the reverse, I don't know, is that when I do get angry or vexed with a person I don't readily let my anger go, and say to myself I do well to be angry. If Mrs. Phear had come to me or to us both together and said her bitterest about not being married in Church, etc., I would have admired her courage and have not been angry in the least. But I think it was rather mean to endeavour to work on my Annette's sensitive feelings and if the latter had been less firm and steady of nature Mrs. P. might really have done some harm. Thank goodness everything is right again but I was very miserable when I first got your letter and vented my wrath on Mrs. Stuart in a way that astonished her in one usually so quiet as I am and which was not a just return for all her kindness to me. I apologised next morning and we are as great friends as ever.

You asked me what sort of hat I liked, so I send you a l'illustration with a picture on the last page of a young lady in a lovely hat and lovelier collar. Observe also the earring. I think that controversy about earrings will be an admirable *pièce de résistance* for the future. Although I abhor compromise I hereby offer one, viz. to give up chimney pot hats if you will wear earrings. If I were to present you with a pair now wouldn't you wear them? Pearl earrings now would be a pleasant suggestion of Baniapookur would they not? By the way, where is this same Pookur for I have never seen it.

Now Darling, rest yourself and let me call for you on Monday to take you to Ballygunge. I won't do so unless you allow me to do so but as you are strong be also merciful and remember that you are a Heart-Mistress as well as a Head-Mistress and that your loving fiancé



## *India Called Them*

is only beginning his lessons and requires them to be frequently repeated to him.

21/3/75.

. . . I wandered for about two hours among the streets and lanes of North Calcutta yesterday and never found the Chorbazar School. My own fault you will say, for I mislaid the notice and so didn't know the name of the street where the meeting was to be. After all I was not *very* anxious to be present, it being enough for me that I did my best to obey orders and so I did not come back broken hearted. We went into all sorts of queer places and saw the dead cats, the offal and the legions of flies which occur in the inside of the platter and which represent the other side of the stuff of Calcutta improvements. A vegetarian people, however, have less rubbish to get rid of than a flesh-eating one and poverty on the whole bears a much less dread aspect in Calcutta than it does in London or Edinburgh. There are no gin palaces (their place being apparently supplied by sweet-meat shops) and not much terrible squalor. The chief regret one feels in looking at the narrow lanes and the small dark rooms is that the inhabitants cannot be able to get the South breeze and have no Maidan to expatiate in.

I send you back the French book. It is unutterable twaddle. There is not a trace of French sweetness or vivacity in the language nor of French brilliancy in the thoughts, and it reads as if it was a publication of the Religious Tract Society or of Messrs. Nisbet & Co. which has first been diluted with a large quantity of eau sucré and then translated into French by the *bonne* of a French pension or some poor and pious curé. L. T. must, however, be amiable to like such a book and it is a relief to think that she does admire it for then one can understand her being able to endure *tête à têtes* with her husband. Conceive a woman who could converse being married to one who talks like poor Poll and who even if he does write like an angel writes like one whose wings have the monotonous swing of an Indian punkah.

. . . Wherein am I hasty about your sister? Because I said she was not a bit like you, you take for granted that I don't think much of her. Oh you foolish Annette, do you not think it is possible for me to admire anybody who is in a different style from you. Now I should think there are some things in which Fanny has better taste and more common sense than you. For example, I am sure that she wears earrings or at least that she would like to do so if it were not for fear of her younger sister. I have an idea of her as one who ought to have been the younger sister and who used to lean on you, and I suspect you are slightly jealous of her having transferred some of her

### *Act III of 1872*

trust and affection to her husband. Well you have got somebody else too and you can take care of him and bring him up by hand. Only do not hope to convert him on the subject of earrings. . . . I admit my perversity and the elation to which you refer and I am very sorry to say that I am likely to be more perverse than ever now, for as long as I have your love I care neither for King nor Kaiser and will go my own or rather our own road more determinedly than ever. But the road will be a Barrackpur avenue or a walk on the Delectable Mountains and I won't think it necessary to make the road rougher than it is or to discover giants in harmless windmills or always to be taking it for granted that everyone we meet and who therefore is not going exactly our way is a thief and a robber.

By the way I never quite believed that chapter in the Bible where all the fervent spirits of old are described as thieves and robbers and as if Ante-Christian and Anti-Christian were the same thing. There is a note of Judaism and provincialism about it and I suppose Michelet was right when he said that Palestine was not big enough for him. . . .

21/3/75.

I think you are quite right to wish to keep your name. It is much prettier and more distinguished than mine and I don't at all approve of the practice of merging the wife's individuality in the husband's. So I shall be very glad if you will sign yourself A. Akroyd-Beveridge. . . . What do you think I have been doing. Singing hymns with Mrs. Stuart so you see I have not got quit yet of my religiosity. Jerusalem the Golden Part I is my favourite especially the lines The shout of them that triumph, the song of them that feast. They seem to me to harmonise with the spirit stirring strains of the Marseillaise and La Parisienne. Rowland Hill said it was a pity the Devil had all the good tunes and so he converted secular strains into sacred. Query—did he not in doing so make them over to a worse Devil, viz. the Devil of fear and superstition, and might he not lament that the latter has appropriated tunes which might stir the heart of the faithful. My father was very fond of music and had a very good ear though not much voice. He used to tell me I was timber-tuned and I know my ear is defective. Yet I like to make a noise sometimes and even was fool enough to take some lessons in singing when I was on furlough. But it was too late and it is only when I am happy as just now that I feel as if I could sing a Scotch song. . . .

My Own Sweet Lily,

22/3/75.

Susan does mean lily in Arabic and Persian and so I suppose Susannah must mean the same in Hebrew. I'll get Miss Yonge's or

### *India Called Them*

some other book however on the subject and find out, though I am half afraid to look for fear that Susannah might turn out to mean something else. . . .

Your friend's lines are beautiful; I must keep them and read them over again. I hope you never really thought that I was disappointed at your being undemonstrative. I never found you so and am perfectly content with your manner of loving. It pleases you to think that you are undemonstrative, and it pleases me to say that you are so, but in fact I think you are a most demonstrative person, for the fact of a letter being written in cipher or in invisible ink does not make it the less plain and easy of interpretation to those who have the key. If you were not a woman *au bout des ongles* as the French say you would never write to me as you do nor could I love you so much. I will confess that in old days when I was at Barisal I used to think of you too much merely as a clever high-principled woman and so write coldly to you, and then in my foolishness I was disappointed that you wrote back to me in somewhat the same style. You were so much everything else that I wanted in a wife that I used to wish I could love you and feel that there were heat-rays as well as light-rays in your composition. But I was held back and blinded, partly by remorse for the sweet young life which I had, as I sometimes thought, crushed and blasted and partly by the fact that I knew you chiefly through letters and had never seen you when "Love in your eyes sits blazing." I used often to think of Jeannie as Marguerite, or let me rather say Gretchen, and used almost to shudder at the resemblance between them and also at the resemblance in wickedness between myself and Faust, who, by the way, was also called Henry.

I remember my sister Phemie who has a knack of saying striking things at times, remarked when seeing Jeannie and me together that we were like Faust and Marguerite. Dear Annette, after my marriage I found the wickedness I had committed in mating myself with one who with all her love and purity and gentleness should have been my daughter and not my wife. She saw it too, for love is clear-sighted and though she loved me deeply to the end she would sometimes say you must forget your poor school-girl and marry again, or she would sadly say that she hoped I would not feel her death as a relief. I feel as Thackeray says in *Esmond* that in writing this I am walking at the bottom of the sea and treading among the bones of shipwrecks and I would not have strength or courage to do so, did I not know that by a pull at the diving rope I can emerge at once into life and sunshine. Let me give that pull and tell you my own sweet lily and my own heart's ease that you are my life and my joy and that I have

### *Act III of 1872*

never been so happy and never so exalted in my life as I have been since the 13th March. . . . I quite agree with you about going to the Registrar's Office in your walking dress and I think Mrs. Stuart would be quite sufficient support to you though if you liked it Miss Gonsalves and perhaps one of your pupils might come too.

For my own part I shall be too proud and happy to hear you say that you will take me for your husband to care for any externals. The dingy room and the official papers will become transfigured.

'Tis a note of enchantment, what ails him? He sees  
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees  
Bright volumes of vapour through Laledighi glide  
And a river flows on by the Registrar's side.

Do you know this "Reverie of poor Susan" of Wordsworth. The adaptation and the finding of a suitable rhyme to glide have cost me some cogitation so I hope you will admire it and begin to think I am a poet without words.

The reference to Esmond in this letter is to the end of Chapter XIII in Book II, where Esmond in Brussels finds his mother's grave. Having laid bare to Annette his thoughts of Jeanie, Henry proceeded to tell her all about his family.

23/3/75.

. . . My Own Love, and you think you are cold and undemonstrative, do you. Perhaps you are, but if so your coldness and undemonstrativeness are marvellously sweet and I don't want you ever to change them. Though I think you *might* have given me more than three kisses considering the number I gave you and considering too how well you and I have observed the proprieties since the 13th. I liked even better than your kisses your hiding your head on my shoulder. There was such a sweet surrender about it and it was like the coming down into the valley of the Princess Ida. Your Minervamoods and your *Headmistressism* deserted you then and you came to me as you really are—a sweet loving woman with all the softness of a dove and all the timid shrinking confiding tenderness which belong to my tropical Lily and Lotus. My dear sensitive plant, something has struck upon your leaves and shut them up in days gone by, but they are opening out again and I do not believe that they will ever fold up again unless for a little while just to give them rest. It is a curious thing that timid, nervous natures should always be the bravest on occasion. Women are really braver than men *because* or at least *although* they are more nervous than men and it is the most nervous

### *India Called Them*

and sensitive women who are the bravest. Take for instance Joan of Arc, Madame Lavalette, Madame Roland, and that young Scottish lady Catharine Seyton, who thrust her arm through the ring of a bolt when James the First's assassins were coming in and so held the door fast until her arm was broken.

I don't know if I ever told you much of the origin of my family. It is by no means exalted for my father's father was neither more or less than a baker in a country town and my mother's father was a Supervisor of Excise. There was a Friar Beveridge, however, who became a Protestant and was burnt on the Castle Hill of Edinburgh for his belief some time before the Reformation. I would fain claim kindred with him and would be much more proud if I could prove that than if I could prove relationship with Bishop Beveridge. My father's people came from Dunfermline in Fifeshire and my mother's from Linlithgowshire. Though my mother's father was only an exciseman he no doubt belonged to a gentler stock than my father's people and had a small piece of landed property which had been in the possession of his family ever since the time of Queen Mary or even earlier, I think. There are only some twenty or thirty acres but we have the old Charters for it yet and my mother, and indeed all of us are not a little proud of the possession. It still belongs to us, my mother being life-rented in it and on her death it will go to my eldest brother, David. When I was home on furlough I paid a pilgrimage to it and was quite interested in looking upon our old ancestral property. It yields about £50 a year. My mother has always maintained the superiority of her family to my father's and no doubt she is right as regards antiquity and also as regards certain gentlenesses and poetic feelings, but I must confess that all the pith and vigour of our family come from the father's side. My mother has been a dreamer all her life and at 76 or 77 is as undisciplined in her ways and thoughts as she was at 17. I hope you won't think that in writing this I am botanising on my mother's grave, though it has sometimes appeared to me that there is something to be said even for such botanizers (is this a Browning or a Beveridge perversity? It is a little like Browning's reflection on the glove flung into the lion's den is it not?) and that Wordsworth and sentimentalists are too hard on them. Physicians when dying have turned their thoughts to the observing and recording of their symptoms for the benefit of posterity and might not such men have botanized even in the holiest of places if it had been necessary, and would they not have been right in so doing? My father was a clergyman, then a lawyer, then a bookseller's hack, then an editor and lastly an author. My mother was very pretty in her youth, and



*Miss Akroyd's School in March 1875*



### *Act III of 1872*

that and her love of reading attracted my father while his being a clergyman and a clever, well-read man attracted her, and they were married. But I am afraid that it was not a happy marriage and that my father married the wrong sister—the other, my Aunt (referred to in a letter of Maggie's) having been much the finer character of the two. Both my mother and my Aunt had money, i.e. they had about £16,000 between them and I am sorry to say that my father mismanaged it and that we lost everything. How my father spent it I can't exactly say, and perhaps he could not say either. I am sure we did not get much pleasure out of the spending. It was muddled away somehow and chiefly, I believe, by our living beyond our income and breaking in upon the capital.

My mother has really, I believe, been happier as a widow than she was as a wife though there was a good deal in common between my father and mother too and they were often very happy together. Still she has been freed from money cares since then and that has been an immense relief to her. . . . But to return to you my darling. I am sorry to see you fixing yourself to stick to the School and am apprehensive lest the effort be too great for your strength. I am going to see Mrs. Phear to-day and to ask her to relieve you as soon as possible. No one doubts your courage or your determination but if you get ill you can neither do justice to yourself nor to your School. I don't want you to hasten your marriage day, at least I don't care about that so much, but I do want you to be relieved of drudgery as soon as possible. . . .

Annette was too busy to tell Henry all about her family in return for this. She gave him her father's ring. She told him about her full sister Fanny and agreed with his view that Fanny, in relation to her, took the younger sister's place, followed in place of leading. She had at this time little contact with her step-mother or half-sisters; she had not heard from the second Mrs. Akroyd since she had been in India.

23/3/75.

. . . So it was a fib you told me about your having answered all my letters! I not only used to think about you at Barisal but I used to talk about you too and I am sure my engagement will be no great surprise to some of my Barisal friends. I remember, however, feeling that I never could aspire to be the husband of a young lady who wrote that she was going to read Mill's Autobiography as a holiday-treat. I felt somewhat as the Scotch giant did when he went to fight with the



## *India Called Them*

Irish giant and was deceived by the wife of the latter putting her husband into a cradle and passing him off as the baby. The problem which came before me was: If a young lady reads Mill as a recreation what in the name of heaven and Newton-Chattillet does she do when she does exert her mind?

I used to ask Krishna Govinda Gupta about you and when Man Mohan Ghose came and stayed with me I sent him a message for you.

I remember too writing to you and telling you that Ram Mohan Roy had a Mahomedan mistress and I reproached myself afterwards for doing so for I said Miss A. will think that I look upon her as a strong-minded woman to whom one can talk as to a man and so will not get the idea which I wish to convey to her, namely that I might be a possible lover. But in fact, Darling, I could not have proposed to you much earlier than I did for I was too broken in heart and hope seriously to contemplate a second marriage. . . .

In response to this, Annette revealed that she had not liked altogether being written to as if she was different from other ladies. She thought it, moreover, not a bit remarkable "for some one who spends her time teaching elements to rush to something harder for a holiday"; she did not start with the advantage of having the same sense of humour as Henry. But she was mollified by Henry's having thought about her in Barisal and she gave away the secret of her earlier unresponsiveness.

Do you know that it makes me feel much happier and more tranquil about our marriage, that you did think about me in Barisal? . . . Do you remember writing to me about Keshub? and offering to write even to him, for me. Indeed I was very grateful, but not on that account even was I able to go on writing to you. We women are obliged to seem ungrateful sometimes.

Nor was Annette able to share the excitement about Act III of 1872, which Henry showed in his next letter. To Annette the way to marriage with Henry remained an unhappy ceremony about which the less said the better—by anybody at any time.

Tuesday the 23rd.

. . . Mr. Beverley was doing his best to chaff me yesterday and when I said I was not going to do the thing (marriage) in a corner he said certainly not and that I and poor Eliot Macnaughten would be the two subjects of conversation in Calcutta for some days. I

### *Act III of 1872*

know George Barclay the Editor of the *Englishman* a little and I called on him yesterday and told him the facts so that if he ever wants to put in a paragraph he has got the real story. I even told my Tailor, remarking to him that though I was going to be married in an unromantic manner I did not see why my coat, etc. should not be of the orthodox cut. We can change or abandon our religion but we must be conservative with regard to our Tailor and our Hatter. Or in other words, if I cannot both be clothed and in my right mind at my marriage I shall at least be the first of these two things. . . .

26/3/75.

. . . I feel rather tired this morning in consequence of the endurance I had to practise during the Lecture. After we are married I do not think we shall go to Lectures, at least not to those of the Bethune Society. However I am not at all sorry that I went last night. . . .

On this point at least Annette was able to give reassurance to Henry, though her alternative to lectures might not have appealed to another lover:

26/3/75.

Do not be alarmed about the future. We will not go to lectures. We will stay at home and you shall read French and I German to one another. (There is something odd about that sentence, is there not?) Are you willing to do that when we go into banishment with only the frogs in the tank for our companions?

In the same letter she set Henry's mind at rest on a more urgent matter. She let him know obliquely that if it suited Mrs. Phear she would marry him on April 6th or 7th. On this Henry took the bit in his teeth and settled with Mrs. Phear the date when Annette should finally leave her school. "I never," said Annette, "had my own way so little in my life. It is quite a novelty to feel that I don't belong to myself." With date and all else settled, Henry ceased to erupt, but went on writing love.

28/3/75.

. . . I am going to write away at my history to-day and not go out calling and I hope that you will rest quietly. I send you some French Illustrations and a Life of Mendelssohn which I picked up on a book stall the other day. I have not quite finished it but don't care to read any more of it just now and it may help to divert your thoughts.

## *India Called Them*

Musicians seem to be an even more excitable race than poets and to have even less calm happiness in life. His father was most anxious that he should marry and so get tranquillised and the experiment succeeded and might have been quite effectual if his wife had not died. I am concerned to think that you may have imagined me in earnest in saying that you were extravagant and a bad manager. Scotch humour consists very largely of that dry sort which is formed by saying the exact opposite of what one means. This variety of humour strikes me often as somewhat heavy and stupid but it belongs to my nation and family and so I can't get rid of it. Mrs. Goldie always praised you highly for your neatness and management and as your fellow cabin passenger she had a good opportunity of judging. As for your extravagance I never saw or heard of any such trait in your character. There's a palinode for you. . . . I must show you some day my solitary literary production, an Essay on Christianity in India in the Theological Review. I have not got a copy now.

My friend Morris was pleased to say once that I was one of the readiest writers in the service but in fact writing has always been a great labor to me unless indeed when I write a letter to somebody I like.

Now my Darling, do write me a letter with a beginning and an end to it. . . .

1/4/75.

. . . One more night has gone and it is getting very near now to the wedding-day. I am perfectly happy at the thought of its coming so soon and I hope that you, my Own Darling, are happy also. You lay down your Headmistress-ship to-day and with that you have to lay down all the sternness which you try to put on sometimes and yet are not very successful in assuming. Some people find out each others' dispositions after marriage but you see I have found you out before and know that you are a simple, loving, soft-hearted woman for all your grand airs. Many thanks my darling for your songs last night, I never heard Kennst Du Das Land before, and was delighted with your singing of it.

My dear *Susannah*, lilies grow in valleys and by the banks of streams and not on barren mountain peaks and so my own Lily of the Valley you are only following your name in coming down from the heights of schoolmistress-ship and giving all your sweetness up to your husband. I don't quite admire Tennyson's Princess for I think the Prince a bit of a muff and I think *Ida* yielded too much and sank into a commonplace wife, but some of the passages are beautiful.

### *Act III of 1872*

But you, my Darling, will not have to yield anything, for I love you as you are and I never wish you to give up your working for others and your desire to make other people happier and better. If I thought my darling that by marrying you I would hamper you in any way or clip the wings by which you fly above the mists and vapours of selfishness, I should be very sorry. But I do not think anything of the kind though even if I did I am afraid I would not give you up for I cannot do without you my darling though *with* you I think I could do anything. . . . Do please send me a letter with a beginning and an end to it.

Not unnaturally Annette wondered sometimes what Henry had felt or still felt about Jeanie. What had been in his mind when he planned to go back on furlough again? What had he said to his kinsfolk about marrying again? Henry told her and revealed that the understanding Maggie had been the wisest of them all.

3/4/75.

. . . I made no promises to my mother or Maggie. I told my brother to meet me at Marseilles and sent him thirty pounds for his expenses & it probably he would get my second letter before he left London. If not he is quite capable of taking care of himself and will enjoy his trip very much even though I am not with him. I did tell Mrs. Goldie and Maggie through her in a rather rhodomontading letter that I never meant to marry again, etc., etc., but that was only, you see, the grand final volley fired by the garrison just before it surrenders. About a year ago David wrote that Mrs. Howison hoped I would marry again and I wrote an indignant letter back. Subsequently Mrs. Goldie hinted at the same thing and said she would be happy if she saw me with some one who would take care of me, and I again wrote not indignantly but as I thought decidedly. My sister Maggie though was the wisest of all for when I wrote to her half-complaining that my friends at home were wanting me to marry again and saying that I was sure she would agree with me in thinking I should not marry again she preserved a discreet silence and took no notice of my letter. No doubt she said to herself it is useless to try to drive him, let him alone and he will get on to a fresh thought of his own accord.

Do you know I think I am like in some things that rather weak and selfish, pain-avoiding mortal John Sterling and like him I have eine fürchterliche Fortschritung as Goethe said of Schiller (vide Mill's Autobiography which you will find in the compartment of

### *India Called Them*

your bookshelf devoted to Seaside and Railway Reading Books) . . . I am very glad to hear you like society though indeed I knew it before. I like society too.

The next letter, the last but one of this courtship, revealed Henry's understanding that, even without him, Annette's mission to Indian women was near its end when he broke in.

5th April, 1875.

. . . Only one day more now. You will bid goodbye for ever to Baniapookur to-day and I have no doubt you will feel some sorrow in doing so. But you know that you could not have stayed there for ever and that at the most you have only anticipated your intended departure by a month or two.

Which do you think will be the hardest work? To keep fourteen girls in order or to manage your husband. One advantage will be that you will at least have no Committee to consult and that you will be quite free to follow your own devices. Isn't there a schoolmistress who is all kinds of perfections and also marries somebody at last in the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table? There is also a famous passage in Love's Labour's Lost about the good effect of marriage on promoting study etc. which Coleridge talks of as the finest piece of rhetoric in Shakespeare.

I don't remember any historical instance of a great schoolmistress falling in love but no doubt your historical learning will enable you to quote cases.

There was Hypatia to be sure, but even Kingsley only makes her half and half in love with anybody. And there was Romola who was her father's amanuensis and who married poor Tito who by the way is rather harshly treated by George Eliot. Poor man he entertained a goddess unawares and was not strong enough for the society. Entertaining angels unawares may be very delightful but I should think the unfortunate host must feel sometimes a sentiment of lassitude creep on him and wish for the being not too high or good for human nature's daily food. He will feel like me sometimes when I think I am expected to talk clever. Not indeed My Darling that I feel that with you, though I may say so sometimes. You are my Heart's Ease, you know, and the green shade to my eyes, so I write and talk to you whatever comes uppermost. Shall I go *meandering* on any longer or shall I (dear me I hope *will I* is not the proper grammar) have mercy on you and stop. Well I think I'll stop and will conclude with asking you to send me a letter and to tell me anything you want me to do. . . .

*Act III of 1872*

4 Kyd Street,  
Tuesda/, April 6 1875.

My Darling,

I send you the last letter which I shall ever write to Annette Akroyd. This night you will sleep in my arms and henceforth you and I will fare through the world together. May we never be separated and may you never have cause to regret the day when you trusted me with your father's ring. I have no fears whatever for my own happiness and in future I think it will only be the sorrow of others which will touch me. I too like the poet of the Bridges have sometimes thought my burden greater than I could bear and have had a hot and restless heart. It is you my own Heart's Ease who have already soothed me and who I know will do so yet more all the after days of my life. You, My Darling, left all by yourself in this country and without your sister or any other near friend or relative beside you must, I doubt not, feel sometimes a little anxious about the future and be wondering if you have chosen rightly. But I am sure also that you are on the whole happy and that you trust and love me. And when I, if I can do so, put my own feelings on one side and think only of your interests and of how the marriage will affect you I confess that I do not think that you have any real grounds for fear and that I believe that you will be happy—happier even than in the days when you were your friends' Sunshine. For I take it, Darling, that you must have been happy there else you could not have had sunshine to pour into the hearts of others. I am happy now and will be happier to-night but I do not think I shall be so happy in India or on the voyage as I will be on the day when I will introduce you to my mother and sister. My sister Maggie is a feminine edition of myself and therefore much purer and brighter, so I have no doubts about her loving you or of you loving her. In fact you already know her very well on account of your knowing me. She lectures me on my restlessness and impulsiveness but she is a wee bit restless herself though I do not think she is fidgetty. But you know I am not to be fidgetty either after I gather my fleur de lys. You see I connect you through your middle name with my beloved France and expect you to share my grief about Alsace and Lorraine. Perhaps the above is rhapsodical nonsense but I do not think it is so altogether. I write it to you because I know you understand me and will not laugh at me or try to crush out my fancies because I express them badly or awkwardly. I come from a hard, practical country and perhaps in the recoil from it I am sometimes too soft and want the requisite amount of grit. It is so hard, darling, to have both grit and softness

## *India Called Them*

though there are sweet flowers among the granite rocks and rifts in them which do not make the music mute. You say you do not like valleys but what ugly things mountains would be without them. And it is precisely the highest and hardest, rockiest mountains which have the profoundest and most beautiful valleys is it not? I never saw mountains worth the name that hadn't them. It is only arid sand hills and smooth commonplace chalk hills that have not them. Scotland after all is not all a hard country as its music and some of its poetry show. I fancy the Celtic element in it has softened it and you know too it is an old remark that the Scotch and French have always been allies and that there is more resemblance between them than between the English and French. But I see your practical English head with the fly-away hair beginning to shake over this letter and asking where is the matter of fact epistle that he promised me. So I'll draw the curtain and give you some Baniapukurism, i.e., practicalities for a change.

Well then, the bearer of this letter has got a ticca gharry with him and he will take your box or boxes. So please make it over to him. Your Ayah can come to-morrow with my Khidmutgar and can bring any other things you require. I shall also have a small portman-teau in the carriage along with us. It will be more than half empty and you can put into it anything you require at the last moment. I will bring it up to Ballygunge and it will serve as a footstool for you on your way to Serampur if for no other purpose. This will be a long day for you, My Darling, but time and tide run through the roughest day and eight o'clock will come at last. Your rest will begin as soon as you get into the carriage and I won't expect you to speak or to do anything but rest until we get to Serampur.

Rest is contagious just as much as unrest and I can assure you that your best method for curing me of unrest and fidgettiness will be to let me see you at rest and happy yourself.

I will be at the Registration Office at 4.20 and will meet you there at 4.30. We won't be more than ten minutes in the office and thereafter will go back in the Phears' brougham to Ballygunge. Do you think that Mrs. Beveridge will give her husband one kiss on the way back if the syce is not looking and there are no proprieties to be outraged? I believe a kiss is really a part of the marriage ceremony and as we unfortunately cannot indulge in it at the very moment of the ceremony the best thing we can do is to exchange it as soon after as possible. I ought not to have used the word *indulge* when what I am talking of is a grave judicial act. It is the seal or the sealing wax you know

### *Act III of 1872*

and hence Disraeli in *Lothair* instead of saying that his hero kissed Corisande says that he "sealed her speechless form" though why speechless I don't know. The *Register* of course is the glue but as I pointed out glue melts in India and therefore we had better have the seal in addition.

The *Register*, the ring and the seal ought between them to make a threefold cord which as you know is not quickly broken.

Your loving betrothed and 4.30 p.m. husband,  
H. Beveridge.

In case Annette should feel that even the end of this letter did not concentrate sufficiently on Baniapookur practicalities, Henry sent in the same envelope a four-page memorandum telling her meticulously how to get to the Registration Office and what would happen there, what he would say and she would answer.

Four-thirty p.m. on April 6, 1875, came at last. Annette went dutifully before the native Registrar in Larkins Lane, signed after Henry a printed declaration that she did not profess any of the prescribed assortment of religions, and was married under Act III of 1872. Henry and Annette were the first or nearly the first beneficiaries of this Act. An Indian friend many years afterwards told their son that the Act came colloquially to be called the Beveridge Act.

There followed a wedding party in the house of Mr. and Mrs. Phear, a moonlight drive to Serampur, a fortnight there, and then on April 22nd Henry and Annette set off in the s.s. *Peshawar*, to present their accomplished fact to their surprised relations on both sides.

Henry's second marriage was the antithesis of his first one. He passed from a schoolgirl of 17 to a schoolmistress of 32, from a Scot of his close family circle to a stranger brought to him by chance from England. Jeanie in his story remains inevitably a shadowy figure. She was 19 only when she died in seeking to give Henry his first child. No one can tell what kind of mate she would have made for his long life to come. Two things are certain. Her time with Henry was supremely happy, and her gentle ghost never came between him and his later loves; her memory was built into his new life.



### *India Called Them*

Annette in her first year as Henry's wife noted "Jeanie's anniversary" in her diary and wrote to Mrs. Goldie for that day. Jeanie's sister Annie was Henry and Annette's first guest from England. Their second daughter was given the names of her own mother and of Jeanie. All the children on their first visit to Scotland were taken to stay with Mrs. Goldie; on this or another visit she gave an album to Annette with the inscription: "From Eliza Goldie to Annette Beveridge in remembrance of a friendship begun in the S.S. Xantho and followed by other ties." Mrs. Goldie's friendship with Henry and Annette and David lasted through life. In Annette's mind, as she once wrote to Henry, she and Jeanie were inseparably united by him, for both loved him.

The unromantic ceremony in Larkins Lane, as it opened a new chapter, closed old chapters for both the principals, for Annette as well as for Henry. The Hindu Mahila Bidyalaya, though it was not called Miss Akroyd's School, in fact depended on Miss Akroyd. Within a year of her becoming Mrs. Henry Beveridge that school was closed, though something was done to replace it.

In the endless warfare of men and women against ignorance, and of women against enslaving tradition, there are victories and defeats and forlorn hopes. Annette's mission to India was one of these last. She found no demand for her. She brought no battalions. She had no natural allies. The Government was thinking of other things. The Christian missions looked askance at one who might have no religion, and who was ready to declare herself not a Christian. She was an almost solitary sniper attacking a fortress. She came in due course, for she never blinked facts, to speak of her voyage as a mad venture and of her time in Calcutta as semi-suicide.

That does not mean that the venture was not worth making and left no results. Twenty-five years later in England Annette looked back on it, in writing not of herself but of her friend and chief ally Lady Phear, then lately dead.

In thinking over the results of the work in which Lady Phear took so great a part, there is one which is of the utmost importance. Of the greater part of India it can unfortunately still be said that it has no girls. It has children and married women and no class such as we

### *Act III of 1872*

think of here when we speak of our girls. But the outcome of that work of 1873 is that there is now a considerable number of Bengali girls who enjoy their irresponsible 'teens as do their English prototypes. Some part of this great good is certainly due to our lost friend's work.

Nothing done for an undying cause is wholly in vain, not even semi-suicide in Calcutta.

*To marry is to domesticate the Recording Angel.*

R. L. Stevenson: *Virginibus Puerisque* (1881).

*Buttons and darning are a part of the profession I have adopted and must be seen to. When they are satisfactorily done with we will see about articles and novels.*

Annette from Switzerland to Henry in London,  
August 11, 1876.

*Couldn't I buy you a hat?*

Henry from London to Annette in Switzerland,  
August 11, 1876.

*I am doing what I hope always to do—writing to you exactly as I feel at the moment. Don't let my remarks go for too much with you.*

Henry from London to Annette in Switzerland,  
August 22, 1876.

*I thought you were rather hard on me about the Saturday Review but for all that I was glad you wrote it and I hope you will never hesitate to tell me exactly what you think.*

Henry from London to Annette in Switzerland,  
August 18, 1876.

## Chapter VIII

### RECORDING ANGEL

HENRY and Annette arrived at Southampton at the end of May with eighteen months of furlough ahead of them. Their business was to make themselves known to their relations on each side, to finish what they had come to describe as "our book," that is to say the *History and Statistics of the District of Bakarganj*, to build up their strength again after the exhaustion of Bengal, and above all to get to know one another.

The closest of Henry's relatives to him were his brother David, who came to Southampton to welcome the returning bridal pair, and his sister Maggie, whom he had described to Annette as a female edition of himself. Almost the first visit of Henry and Annette, within a few weeks of their arrival, was to Eyemouth on the Berwickshire coast, where Maggie had become the minister's wife. There they found also Jeanie's mother, Mrs. Goldie, and her grandmother, Mrs. Howison. Annette made friends completely with Maggie and remained friends always with Mrs. Goldie. From Eyemouth Henry went in July to Culross on a preliminary reconnaissance of Jemima, already in her 80th year.

Culross, 10/7/75.

My poor old mother was waiting for me at the station she having walked up all the way (three miles) to meet me. . . . This is always a melancholy house to me and I do not intend to bring you over to it for a little while and then only for a day or two. . . . The house is full of old pictures and china and books which belonged to us in the days of our grandeur. . . . After we get to Edinburgh I hope to set to work on the history for I feel well and strong now and meditate returning to India in February or March next. However we will talk about that when we meet.

Annette's relations with her mother-in-law were never anything but friendly, but on this occasion Henry did not try to make them close. He did not in the event carry out the suggestion made in this letter of returning to India after less than

### *India Called Them*

a year of absence. But that he should make this suggestion showed how India was already burned into him. It was his home.

On Annette's side much the closest of her relations at this time were her full sister Fanny and her brother-in-law James Mowatt. Fanny had been Annette's companion in the Working Women's College and the first confidant of her plan to go to India. She had married James Mowatt less than a year before Annette's own marriage and James had been accepted warmly by Annette as one of her friends. James had become a trustee of Annette's marriage settlement. He and Fanny were there to welcome Henry and Annette at Southampton.

Of the rest of her own family, Annette on this occasion saw relatively little. Of her step-mother, Mrs. Akroyd, there is at this time hardly any mention. Her half-brother Will she did see and was glad to find "so brother-like"; by her half-sisters Katie and Nelly she noted herself as neglected. There was between Fanny with her husband James and Mrs. Akroyd with the second family that fertile source of estrangements—questions as to family property, questions which James as himself a man of property took seriously. Into these disputes Henry and Annette refused to be drawn; neither of them were people to quarrel about possessions. But the fact that they were so close to Fanny and James at this time helped to make them less close to Mrs. Akroyd and her children. Later, as friendship with Fanny weakened, friendship with the second family grew. On her later visits to London Annette always found a home with her step-mother; she invited both her half-sisters to visit her in India and actually took one (Nellie) out with her; she came to regard the two sons of the other half-sister (Kate)—her beloved father's grandchildren—as the next dearest thing to her own children. But on the first visit all this was in the future. The two newly married pairs, Fanny and James, Annette and Henry, saw one another repeatedly. Henry never came to do more than tolerate Fanny, who seemed to him altogether lacking in his Annette's education. Of his brother-in-law, James, he became genuinely fond.

There were plenty of other relations and friends to be visited. Henry and Annette dutifully and willingly went the round of Culross, Eyemouth, Evesham, Stockport, Clifton, Blackheath.

### *Recording Angel*

But their real business was with themselves. They went honeymooning to the west coast of Scotland, and at last, in October 1875, got a furnished house all to themselves—a little house of Mrs. Belloc's at 11, Great College Street, Westminster.<sup>1</sup> Here on Christmas Day the *History of Bakarganj* got finished "all but the General Remarks." Here the General Remarks were added and the last words of all were written on March 13, 1876, the anniversary of their engagement, and to Annette the anniversary of her father's birth. Here also in this same month Henry took an important decision as to his future career. Indian Civil Servants hitherto had been both administrative and judicial. For the future they were to be divided between these functions. Henry had to choose and he chose the judicial side.

In the first months of marriage Henry and Annette were, of course, continuously together. There was no occasion in 1875 for more than a couple of letters from Culross, the one already given and another in which Henry recorded with conscious virtue: "I went twice to church with my mother yesterday up a very steep hill"; all churchgoing had become rather up-hill work to Henry. During 1876, while centred at Great College Street, they were separated more often, as one or other went for short visits alone, Henry to Cambridge in January with James Mowatt and to Scotland in June, Annette to Hastings in March and to Cambridge in May. The stream of daily or twice-daily letters from Henry on every separation began. Most of these letters are short, taken up with travelling plans, or with family affairs. But here and there a passage throws light on the two principal characters.

From Cambridge, in January, Henry wrote to Annette: "These dons are very practised talkers and one feels abashed before them."

I could fancy Cambridge life being very delightful to an undergraduate and it is always one of the regrets of my life that I had not a University education. There is no College Life in the Scotch Universities. Now, however, I feel too old and sad for such a life and wish I were back with you in our little drawing-room at Great College Street. That is my true academy.

<sup>1</sup> The house, now pulled down and rebuilt, is described by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes in *The Merry Wives of Westminster*.

### *India Called Them*

To Cambridge, in May, Henry sent Annette news about her Calcutta school.

I see that Lord Northbrook expressed a deep interest in female education in the letter which he wrote to Mrs. Phear giving a donation to the school intended to fill the void caused by the closing of Miss Akroyd's school.

. . . . .

I am quite as anxious to get down [to Cambridge] as ever you can be to see me. . . . I will remember the bodice and the spectacles.

Annette had already heard some months before about the closing of her school and had written a number of letters to Indian friends about it. That chapter was ended. Her new profession was the care and understanding of Henry. He reported to her from a visit in June to Culross:

Mama bids me say with her love that she thinks me looking better but that I have a terribly stern and stubborn look at times. She says I have great wrinkles in my forehead and I tell her they are the memorials of past conflicts.

My mother bemoans my heresies occasionally but she is evidently very glad to have me here and enjoys her evening game at whist very much. I was telling her that orthodox as she thought herself she was not nearly so much so as her grandmother and had perforce moved with the age. She actually rejects the doctrine of the eternal damnation of unbaptised infants and believes that good heathens and Hindoos will go to heaven.

Henry himself remained firm in his agnosticism. Annette, though to marry Henry she had submitted to renouncing formally the name of Christian, was not able to give up desire for belief in God. While Henry was seeing his mother in Scotland, she re-visited her Unitarian and Theistic friends in Stourbridge and Lancashire. She wanted to know what Henry thought about their views.

Worsley, 8/6/76.

Mr. Dendy talked to me a great deal before going away about a "Divine Mind" to which he attributed all the traits of a personal deity—a paternal God and seemed to think me far wrong when I could not see cause for supposing the personal and paternal attributes.

## *Recording Angel*

But do tell me if you think it contradictory to known facts to suppose that there is a natural force—which has its highest known manifestation in the human brain and which in the degree of the development of the individual brain “makes for” beauty and knowledge? Such a force I could call “Divine Mind” and in thinking of it I can feel the same sense of repose which my old Theistic ideal gave. It gratifies my craving for an ideal unity.

To use a phrase quoted by Mr. Dendy, it gives a unity “in which we live and move and have our being.” The constant notion of individuality (even on this earth) wearies one’s mind and it would be satisfying to be able to rest oneself on the thought of a comprehensive unity.

I hope you will not find my metaphysics vague or unreasonable. I had intended not to write any but being much in my mind they must come out to you.

Henry was not to be entrapped—now or later—into religious argument.

Culross, 6/76.

You will think me unsympathetic with you in your thoughts about Theism. I confess that I have such a feeling of relief at having got rid of such questions and at having laid these spectres of the mind that I do not wish to rouse them up again. I do not say that Theism is not true. All I say is that I can make nothing of the question. I have given it as much attention, perhaps too much indeed, as I could afford and as life is short and one has other things to do I have abandoned the subject just as one throws up an insoluble chess problem or an unguessable (by him) riddle. It is very well for Mr. Dendy to believe in Theism. If he did not I do not see how he could justify himself for having nine children. But he also believes in the sacred right of Manchester and Macclesfield to have a free vent and that it is wrong for the India Government to levy a reasonable duty on European goods for purposes of finance. I think we must be content with ignorance at present. Some future generation may have a revelation and I am far from supposing that man may never see behind the veil. But as yet I think it has not been lifted.

Henry and Annette’s main business in these first years was to get to know one another and to grow into one another. They had also to rebuild their strength, for Bengal had left its mark on both of them. Henry had written to Annette in July 1875 that he was now well and strong again. About Annette he wrote



### *India Called Them*

at about the same time to his mother that "it will be some time before she quite recovers from her Indian labours."

One mark of these labours was a difficulty in hearing. Almost the first thing that Henry and Annette did on reaching England was to visit an aurist, the first of many similar visits which Annette was to pay, as the disability of deafness grew remorselessly on her. The first origin of this disability cannot now be determined. It is possible that the seed of it was sown by an illness while she was still a girl, but there is no hint of it in any of her early diaries or her first Calcutta days, when she sang and talked and listened to music. The first mention of deafness is after six months of India, in June 1874, when she felt very unwell "with great pain in one ear and deafness," diagnosed as due to a threatened abscess; she described this as another "cross" of Calcutta. The results of the first visit to an aurist in June 1875 are nowhere recorded. Then, and for some years to come, she was able to hear sufficiently for practical purposes.

The aurist apparently had no specific for Annette. She was thrown back on seeking a general improvement of health by a cure at St. Moritz in the Engadine. They decided to take St. Moritz on the way back to work at the end of Henry's furlough.

So at the beginning of July 1876 Henry set out for the second time with a wife across Europe on the way to India. But this was a more leisurely and not a continuous journey. By Harwich, Antwerp, and Basel the pair made their way to the Engadine; there Annette stayed, taking a cure of daily baths till into September. For three weeks she was alone there while Henry came back on a flying visit to London, walking over the Albula Pass from the Engadine. His first book, "our book," on the *District of Bakarganj*, was on the point of publication. He was already beginning to think about Warren Hastings and the subject of his next book, and he wanted to read at the British Museum and the India Office before going out to India. The visit was also an occasion for re-furbishing his wardrobe and Annette's. Nothing ever gave Henry more pleasure than being allowed to do for Annette things which were outside his natural competence.

## *Recording Angel*

Hotel Lukmanier,  
Chur. 6/8/76.

. . . Be sure and send me full instructions about your dress. What am I to do about it when I get to London? . . .

There will be rather a difficulty, will there not, about the conveyance of it from Coire to St. Moritz. Mrs. Herbert (the dressmaker) will not pack it very strongly, and I fear it may get crushed or dirtied in the diligence. Possibly it might go in my trunk and if this could be done it would be sure of coming safe. I could easily take out my greatcoat, etc. and strap them into a separate parcel. I think I should like to walk at least part of the way from Coire to St. Moritz but even if I came in the diligence with the dress I could not easily protect it. However, do not distress yourself, I will manage to bring it safely some way or other, and it will be no trouble to me. Take care of yourself and go drives and let me have a full account of your doings.

London, 9/8/76.

Were it not for the British Museum I would come back at once. I was there to-day rummaging among dingy manuscripts. All the writers of them are dead and gone long ago and their hot disputes and eagerly pursued schemes are stilled for ever.

While Henry was in London the reviews of the *History of Bakarganj* began to come; though the last words had not been written till March, the book had been published in July. One of the first notices, in the *Saturday Review*, was far from friendly.

There is a long article in the Saturday on our book evidently written by an Anglo-Indian and probably by Seton Kerr. You will be amused to hear that he animadverts on the Thackeray note and the disparaging remarks about predecessors. However he is on the whole favourable.

I hope that you are getting on with your description of the Engadine or with your novel or with both.

Annette's answer to this letter and to what it said of the *Saturday Review* article came in two letters of August 13th and 14th, to which Henry replied on the 18th.

St. Moritz, 13/8/76.

Your letter and the Saturday have just come. The adverse criticism is just, it seems to me—but perhaps I am biased by its coincidence

### *India Called Them*

in several points with my opinion. I am regretting that I did not say more than I did about your remarks on your predecessors for I did not like your reflections upon them. You were, however, so resolute about the Thackeray note that I hesitated later on to say all I thought, and now I feel sharply the reflection implied upon you by the criticism on these two points because you are not what they suggest, inconsiderate of the feelings of others. I was not "amused" that the "Saturday" agreed with me about the Thackeray note—all my old regret came back and I know more decidedly that it was a wrong note, wrong to the man and wrong to you and useless.

St. Moritz, 14/8/76.

I have been anxious all day lest I might have said anything which might have hurt you yesterday about our book. Forgive me if I did, I was full of regrets when I wrote and perhaps put them in too strongly.

London, 18/8/76.

I thought you were rather hard on me about the Saturday Review, but for all that I was glad you wrote it and I hope you will never hesitate to tell me exactly what you think. Granted that the reviewer was right about Thackeray and my predecessors, surely he talked nonsense about the breezy plains, and his sneer at me for not being a sportsman is but a poor backhander for my objecting to the preservation of pigs for hunting purposes. I don't think I spoke very ill of my predecessors and I thought everybody would see when I spoke of Bakarganj being the dustbin of Bengal, etc., that I implied that I myself was part of the rubbish seeing that I had been shot into it five years ago and left there.

As to the article itself, that was clearly written, as Henry divined, by an Anglo-Indian of the old school, old enough to look down on Henry as "one of the gentlemen who are commonly called competitioners" and glad of any handle for criticism. The "Thackeray note" was an undeniable slip of Henry's. On p. 142 he suggested that a "W. M. Thackeray" who figured somewhat dubiously in a controversy with the East India Company in 1777 might be the father of the novelist; by the time that he reached the end of his proofs Henry had discovered that the suggestion was wrong, since the novelist's father was named "Richmond," and on p. 451 he made this correction. As to reflections on his predecessors, Henry's case was a good one. It was part of his argument for replacing European by native

### *Recording Angel*

administration, particularly in unpopular districts like Bakarganj, that by this measure greater continuity of treatment could be secured. The real quarrel of the Saturday Reviewer was with Henry's fundamental thesis that progress to Indian in place of English administration should be made as fast as practicable and not with every possible delay. Not unnaturally the Saturday Reviewer thought Henry's "General Remarks," and even more the "Note to the General Remarks," out of place. But they were of the essence of Henry's argument.<sup>1</sup>

By the discussion of this review the right and duty of each partner to say at all times to the other what was in his or her mind were established. The interchange of letters between London and the Engadine continued. Annette was contemplating writing a book herself. Henry, while gathering materials for his own book, pursued as a pleasure the furbishing of Annette's wardrobe, and as a duty of increasing difficulty the acquaintance of her nearest relations—James and Fanny Mowatt.

London, 11/8/76.

Couldn't I buy you a hat? I could get Fanny's assistance and it would be no trouble at all to me to buy it.

Annette's answer on August 14th was:

St. Moritz.

It will be troublesome I fear to bring me a hat—if you find it not too troublesome, however, I shall be very pleased to have one of your choice from Brandon's—not Mde. Louise! Don't spend too much on it dear!

London, 13/8/76.

I have just come back from Upper Gloster Place. James and Fanny were there and the old lady and gentleman. . . . After dinner James took me out to the enclosure and we sat on a bench there in the cool of the evening enjoying the breeze and looking at the water and the island and the trees while the notes of the Sunday band were occasionally borne on the wind. All this time, however, poor James prosed about Mrs. Akroyd, Great Western shares, dividends, etc. I said yes and no mechanically and apparently he did not find out that I had not taken in a word of what he had been saying. Once the thought struck me that it was not quite fair not to try to comprehend what he

<sup>1</sup> More is said of them later, in the Epilogue.

## *India Called Them*

was saying but this was immediately followed by the happy thought that not to listen was indeed the fairest thing I could do. For as his was only a one-sided statement if I had listened I should have been sorry not to have had Mrs. A's also and by not listening to James I avoided misjudging her.

He is a dear good fellow but somehow he strikes me as resembling poor Mr. Bravo. . . . Both were briefless barristers, both were amiable affectionate men with doting mothers and both were continually harping on investment and "the estate."

It was not surprising that soon after Henry should write to Annette of her sister and brother-in-law: "I have given up that couple for I can do them no good and I do not think they can do me any." They were the victims of interest in possessions. Their relations—or rather Fanny's relations to Annette—passed through a continuous alternation of summer and winter, with winter chiefly towards the end.

The main interest of the two correspondents was naturally in discovering and telling one another about themselves. They had not been married long and they both had much to learn.

London, 9/8/76.

. . . I am restored to amiability. Not long after I had dropped the letter to you into the box, the little page-boy came to me in the drawing-room and brought me your letter. I was very glad to get it but please don't write in German characters for I can only make doubtful shots at the words.

. . . . .

Yes, I think Robertson was morbid and Stopford Brooke as a brother clergyman somewhat similarly circumstanced exaggerates the loneliness of his position. But we are all prone to weak lamentations.

I used to think myself an unhappily circumstanced man but when I look back and compare my lot with that of others I find that nearly all my sorrows have been of my own making and that I have had or might have had all and more than all that I really wanted.

I wanted food and I got it. I wanted a competence and I got more, I wanted power and I got it, I wanted freedom of speech and thought and I got them, I wanted health and I got it, I wanted distinction and I got—well quite as much as is good for me or as I deserved and more than all I wanted woman's love and I got that too.

### *Recording Angel*

When one goes into the London parks of a morning and sees the miserable sodden uncared for young men lying on the benches or trying to get an uneasy slumber, or when one comes home to one's club through St. Giles and sees wretchedness and rags and faces with germs of beauty and gentleness in them which will never flower, one asks what have I done that I should be so happy.

It's all a great mystery but folding the hands or brooding will never do any good so let us always get up again if we are downcast and try to look and act pleasantly to others.

St. Moritz, 11/8/76.

It delights me that you know a little how I love you—for you do know though you take a pleasure in making me demonstrative and outspoken. I have a double sentiment as of a happiness attained and a danger escaped in our marriage, because it would have been so easy to have differed much or to have been indifferent. I have been trying to analyse the feeling of affection and find it grows more binding as one does so and sees the reasonable ground on which it rests.

To this Henry answered:

London, 16/8/76.

Analysis is good at times but do not affect it too much. It is like botanising on a mother's grave, perhaps necessary sometimes, but not to be made a practice of. Our mental and moral operations like our digestions go on better the less we think about them.

While Henry delved in the dust of forgotten controversies in London, Annette devoted herself mainly to her cure in St. Moritz, to long walks and to reading. She played with the idea of a book that she might write. She was not sure whether it would be philosophy or fiction, and she never got started. Her first business was health, as her last letter to Henry in London told him:

I hope I am what I feel—a great deal better. I am pretty sure that I hear rather better and know that walking has become a pleasure to me. . . . I have been thinking much about my book but I will not give myself over to it till I have finished my cure. I still bathe every day.

Henry's last letter from London to St. Moritz was typical of many that would follow.

## *India Called Them*

22 August 1876.

My Dear Love,

I have already written you a letter to-day but I do not think it was a very nice one and so I will write you another.

I am on the whole glad that I came over here and I think I have gathered sufficiently valuable material also to justify the step. But the sacrifice was greater than I thought it at the time and I fervently hope that I may never feel called upon to leave you again. I am so much better when beside you and I seem to deteriorate very rapidly when I leave you who are in truth my guiding star and my staff on which to lean. Or to give the simile a more local colouring I would call you my Alpenstock only that you are not like that chiefly useful in descending mountains (vide Murray's Introduction) but are most valuable when I wish to ascend or to stay myself from going down. Looking back on my fortnight here I am pleased with some things and vexed with others. I have really done the thing I came to do and have read and thought Warren Hastings several hours each day and I have declined amusements and visits to Dover, Culross or Paris (with Mrs. Goldie). So far I am pleased and for this and other good results I am indebted to your influence. On the other hand I have been sometimes idle sometimes luxurious and often censorious.

But perhaps it is weak to indulge in this minute introspection and what says Tennyson—

What keeps a spirit wholly true  
To that ideal which he bears?  
What record? Not the sinless years  
That breathed beneath the Syrian blue:

So fret not, like an idle girl,  
That life is dashed with flecks of sin.  
Abide: thy wealth is gathered in,  
When Time has sunder'd shell from pearl.

I was at Grindlay's to-day and got the circular notes and also the enclosed which will show you that the Fund subscription has been paid up.

Our book is advertised in the *Calcutta Englishman* as on sale by Thacker and Co. price fifteen rupees. So we are on the road and should make our way in time.

A Mr. Rainy writing on Jessore in the July number of the *Calcutta Review* refers in a postscript to my paper read at the Asiatic Society and says that if I have proved the identity of Ciandecan and Dhumghat

## *Recording Angel*

I have made an important contribution towards elucidating the history of the Sundarbans. I always told you that was the discovery which I thought would hand me down to posterity. But if it be one it is marvellous that no one discovered it before for the thing seems very clear.

I have been reading *The Dilemma*. It is a capital novel and I wish I could get it for you. It is the very best Indian novel I have ever read—truthful graphic and manly. It is a soldier's novel, of course, and a civilian's novel or a native's novel has perhaps yet to be written. But I incline just now to the conviction that the heyday of the novel is at an end.

The pulpit has had its day, and those of novels and newspapers are, I think, coming to an end. Nobody nowadays reads leaders with much attention and able editors are no longer the power they were. Personal influence, *facta haud verba*, and statistical observations are the motive powers of the future. I am not hitting at your projected novel. I am only doing what I hope always to do—writing to you exactly as I feel at the moment. Don't let my remarks go for too much with you. If you feel called upon to write a novel follow your star and prove that it is the proper thing to do in the way that Diogenes proved the existence of motion. *Solvitur ambulando*.

I shall post this letter and then go for a walk. How I wish I was with you again. But I have not long to wait and the journey will not seem tedious or the railway hot and dusty for I will feel that every shake of the carriage is bringing me nearer to you.

Henry, of course, did not walk over the passes on the way to Annette, as he had walked over them when going away from her. He came as fast as train and diligence could take him. The two of them went on down the Inn Valley to Innsbruck and so to Verona and Venice, to embark there on September 28th in the s.s. *Baroda*. But this took them only to Port Said: there they disembarked, crossed to Suez by land, and went on in another ship which had waited two days for them, and reached Calcutta on October 29th.

They reached it with no fixed destination beyond and waited for orders. In the middle of November they "got orders for Rangpur." What was the nature of this place?

A younger contemporary of Henry's who some ten years later, by getting into the wrong train at a junction, found himself there instead of on the way to Darjeeling, spoke of himself as



### *India Called Them*

having been "swept to the dismal station of Rangpur."<sup>1</sup> It was not less dismal in 1876, before the railway. Rangpur, in the words of the *Official Gazetteer*, "is a vast alluvial plain unrelieved by natural elevations of any kind." In that respect the district to which Henry took Annette in 1876 was a replica of that to which he had taken Jeanie in 1871. Rangpur was like Bakarganj also in being dominated by great rivers and in the difficulties of transport. Bakarganj, in Henry's words, was more or less under water every September and October; in Rangpur, says the *Official Gazetteer*, more than a third of the total area is inundated during the rains. Barisal, the chief town of Bakarganj, was 180 miles east of Calcutta, and it took six days or more to reach it by water. The town of Rangpur was about 230 miles due north of Calcutta, but it took Henry and Annette five days to get there, by train, river steamer and palki.

All the roads in 1871 were of the 3rd class and practically unbridged, and traffic was with difficulty carried on during the rains. Railways had not yet been introduced. The most important road then was the one from Rangpur to Kaliganj, a distance of 45 miles from the Brahmaputra. Government and private stores were conveyed by steamer to Kaliganj and brought to Rangpur from there by road.

This account by the *Official Gazetteer*, though dated to 1871, was substantially true in 1876. Railways were on the point of being introduced (on January 17, 1878, Henry went to the opening of the North Bengal Railway by Sir Ashley Eden) but they were not yet in action. Henry and Annette, in 1876, had to travel to Rangpur, as her diary records, by the route of Government stores.

November

23 Th. Not well. Left Calcutta for Goalundo. [This as on later occasions no doubt meant a night journey by train, without sleeping accommodation. Goalundo is a port on the Brahmaputra about 150 miles from Calcutta].

24 Fri. On board Mirzapore. [The passengers included "Colonel L. conveying his wife's body to Gowhatty for burial by her daughter."]

<sup>1</sup> *The Ritchie's in India*, by Gerald Ritchie, chap. xvii.

## *Recording Angel*

### November

- 25 Sat. Shipping rice at Sariganj.  
27 Mon. } Reached Kaliganj. Took 15 hrs. to reach Rangpur,  
28 Tue. } where the "station" was away and the circuit-  
house locked. Took possession of a room at Mr.  
Glaisher's. Servants went over to the circuit house.  
29 Wed. Visited our house, a terrible tumble-down place. Mr.  
Kelly in occupation.  
Dec. 1 F. Removed to our house.

Of Annette's first Indian home no description remains. That the account of it as tumble-down was not unfair is borne out by a note in her diary a few months after taking over:

1877 May 21 Excessive rain. House leaking in all directions.

It used to be said of the house by guests that whenever they came to dinner they expected to meet a cobra on the stairs. As the *Official Gazetteer* put it: "Reptiles are abundant in the Rangpur district . . . and are the cause of frequent fatalities when the inundations cause them to seek refuge in the higher lands."

The district assigned to Henry included not only Rangpur proper, about eighty miles by sixty, but also an outlying region of Bogra to the south where Sessions trials were held four times a year. Henry had to visit Bogra regularly for these Sessions, and to visit other parts of his district from time to time.

A visit in those early days at Rangpur did not mean getting into a train or a fast motor-car, to find a hotel awaiting one at the far end. It meant an expedition on horseback or by carriage or palki, with the way usually prepared beforehand by an advance party of servants. Sometimes the state of the roads and the rivers added excitement and danger to the journey. Sometimes the heat made it advisable or necessary to travel by night and rest by day. Sometimes Henry went alone; when he could he took Annette, and the affair became a progress rather than a journey.

More often Henry went alone. Thus, in 1877, having been gazetted a pukka judge as from March 6th, he was at Bogra four times—in March, June, September and December, at Gyabanda, Olipur and Kurigram in April, at Bhotmara in November and Parbatipur in December. Each visit produced its crop of letters—

### *India Called Them*

generally about work and heat and books, but sometimes about domestic relations.

In one of the earliest of them, just two years after marriage, the great earring controversy came to a head. Annette had submitted to having her ears pierced but she had driven a hard, indeed an unconscionable, bargain, that Henry should give up smoking. She now wrote to him at Bogra holding him to his bargain. At first he put up a defence.

18/3/77.

I do not think you are right in charging me with breaking a promise for my understanding was that I was not to smoke so as to annoy you. That agreement I have kept I think pretty faithfully and I did not think it debarred me from smoking when I was away from you. However as the matter is really a trifle and as the habit is one I am better without I withdraw my resistance and shall be smokeless in future. In saying this however I guard myself against making a promise. It is only a declaration and as such is revocable or admits of exceptions.

But Annette was the Recording Angel. She had kept his written promise and sent it by return.

20/3/77 from Bogra.

As you insist on your pound of flesh or in other words on the letter of your bond I have not a word to say. I must fulfil it to the letter. I quite admit that I led you to believe that if you had your ears pierced I would give up smoking altogether and I am sorry that I have once or twice broken the compact. I will endeavour to be more circumspect in future and though it is hard to be taxed by one's own wife with dishonourable conduct I feel that I must submit to it because the charge is legally justifiable.

Happily this treaty was regarded as subject to revision. "I hope that your cigarettes do you good and that you think of me sometimes over them," Annette wrote to him a few years later from Mussoorie. Though Henry never smoked much, and in later life practically never touched either pipe or cigarette, every now and again he was seen with a cheroot, but he always wore with it an air of bravado, like an ex-schoolboy trying it on with his headmaster.

A few extracts from other letters from Bogra about this time serve to show the nature of Henry's life and work.

## *Recording Angel*

22/6/77.

. . . Yesterday was an awful day and all last night there was not a breath of wind. So I lay in my bed with all the doors and windows opened and listened to the striking of the hours and the flitting of the bats till three in the morning when some god took pity on me and I slept. The waking hours were not unprofitable, however, for I thought over a case of dacoity I had been trying and resolved to release a young man with wild and startled eyes against whom the evidence did not seem sufficient.

23/6/77.

The blessed rain came yesterday and continued all night and to-day. . . . Everybody here looks ill except Slack. The Doctor seems at death's door, Coxhead looks used up and worn out, Rattray debile and Dawson yellow. And yet they are a very temperate and quiet living station.

24/9/77.

. . . I am moiling away here and hope to be through my sessions to-day. . . . I had Mr. Dawson to dinner yesterday. He is a melancholy man though a good one and leads a cheerless life because he can't afford to marry and thinks India unsuited to ladies.

26/9/77.

. . . I leave this evening for Jaipur. . . . I have got three Mahomedan minors under my charge and am exercised as to what I should do with them. One of them at least is going to the devil here.

The Maulvi called to see me yesterday and we began speaking about elephants. He offered me his for eight hundred rupees. It is a young one about five years old. I said I would think about it. It is a fine growing animal and would no doubt look well in our compound.

But can we afford a baby elephant as well as a Laetitia?

Laetitia, as will be recorded below, had made her appearance three months before. Henry never rose to an elephant. He found all the excitement he needed in some of his journeys on horse-back. Indeed, in Rangpur of the late 1870's, train journeys were so new as to be an excitement in themselves. Henry had the pleasure of being the first passenger on a new piece of line, with the added joy of travelling on the engine.

Kuarganj Tana, 28/9/77.

I hope that you got my telegram from Jaipur. I arrived there at 6 a.m. having left Bogra at 7 p.m. on the previous evening. I found

### *India Called Them*

that the train did not start till 10.30 and so I lay down on my mattress and had my sleep out. At 2.30 I got to Saidpur and then I learned that Mr. Jenner was just starting for Badarganj on an Engine. This was too good an opportunity to be lost and so I went over to his house and had something to eat and then we started off. It was the first time in my life that I had ever ridden on an engine and I enjoyed it amazingly. Being in front of everything and half in the open air made one feel as if one had to do with the movement so that there was all the excitement of rapid motion. The tender was in front of the engine and the machinery of the engine behind, so that there was nothing to distract the view. We came down to Parbatipur in twenty minutes (it is eight miles) and the breeze blew strongly but not unpleasantly in our faces as we scudded through the green paddy fields and saw the goats and crows rush off the rails as we approached. From Parbatipur we came up to Badarganj and were quite pioneers for it was the first time that an engine had gone up the whole way. So as Mr. Jenner said I was his first passenger and I had the honour of opening the line. At Badarganj I stayed with Mr. Jenner last night and dined with him.

I have just had a big breakfast here in the Thana on the bank of the swift-flowing Jubenaswari. My servant had a good breakfast for me but Mr. Deverhill the sub-inspector has made it luxurious with the addition of ham and egg. The servants will start for Rangpur after they have had their dinner and I will get my tea from Mr. Deverhill. The above will show you that I have fallen very considerably on my feet. I always say that I either fall on my feet or what is next best thing—that I have fallen on my head. When I look back on the last two years and a half of my life I feel that I have a great deal to be thankful for and that it has been the most satisfactory and fruitful part of my life. All this is due to you who took the confusion out of my life and kaleidoscoped the jarring fragments of thought and action. *Quae cum ita sunt*, as Cicero says, it behoves us to be up and doing and to try to make other people's lives happy so far as we can. And it is wonderful how daily and hourly we have opportunities of doing good and of saying words in season.

Last night I was reading Miss Yonge's life of Bishop Patterson and at Saidpur I had a glimpse of a volume of selections from the writings of George Eliot.

Henry never lost a chance of improving his mind by reading. But occasionally he had a disappointment.

## *Recording Angel*

Bogra, 19/12/77.

The Commissioner left some Pioneers behind him and . . . I found a letter from a London correspondent beginning: "In my last I discussed the merits of Warren Hastings concerning whose prowess there is considerable diversity of opinion." I pricked up my ears and began to regret not having seen the previous issue, when lo and behold it was a horse that the idiot was writing about, the next words being "but everybody knows that Monkshood is no Derby horse."

Bogra, 29/9/78.

I am just going to call on Mrs. Barber and Miss Taylor. I wish I were back beside you and Letty. This is very dull society here. I never meet another lady, my dear, without thinking how superior you are to all other women and how fortunate I am in possessing you.

Bogra, 30 September 1878.

I have just been visiting the jail and the Dispensary. I am afraid you will say Bogra is an expensive place when you hear I have subscribed Rs. 20 to a Dispensary verandah. But Dispensaries are a weakness of mine and as I intend to give Rs. 200 from the Muraid Estate I thought I was bound to give something of my own. . . .

I have my murder case to try to-day. . . .

Many thanks for the three novels which I see you have sent me. I have been reading Roderick Random and Jane Eyre. Mr. Rochester somehow suggests to me Sir Ashley Eden. . . .

All these and every other letter which she received from him Annette kept and docketed. In marrying a second time there was no doubt that Henry had domesticated the Recording Angel. Annette had prepared herself for her teaching mission to India by starting at once to learn Bengali and to attend a school for governesses. She took her new profession of being married to Henry with the same seriousness.

One side of this profession was literary writing and reading. She had always read, but from Henry she learned to go on reading even more and even after marriage: there are very few letters between them which do not refer to books. She had always some languages and she set out to practise them with him and upon him, learning to write as well as to speak Bengali, addressing him on one and the same day from Hastings in French, Latin and German (in the German script).

Another side of the new profession was domestic and social.

### *India Called Them*

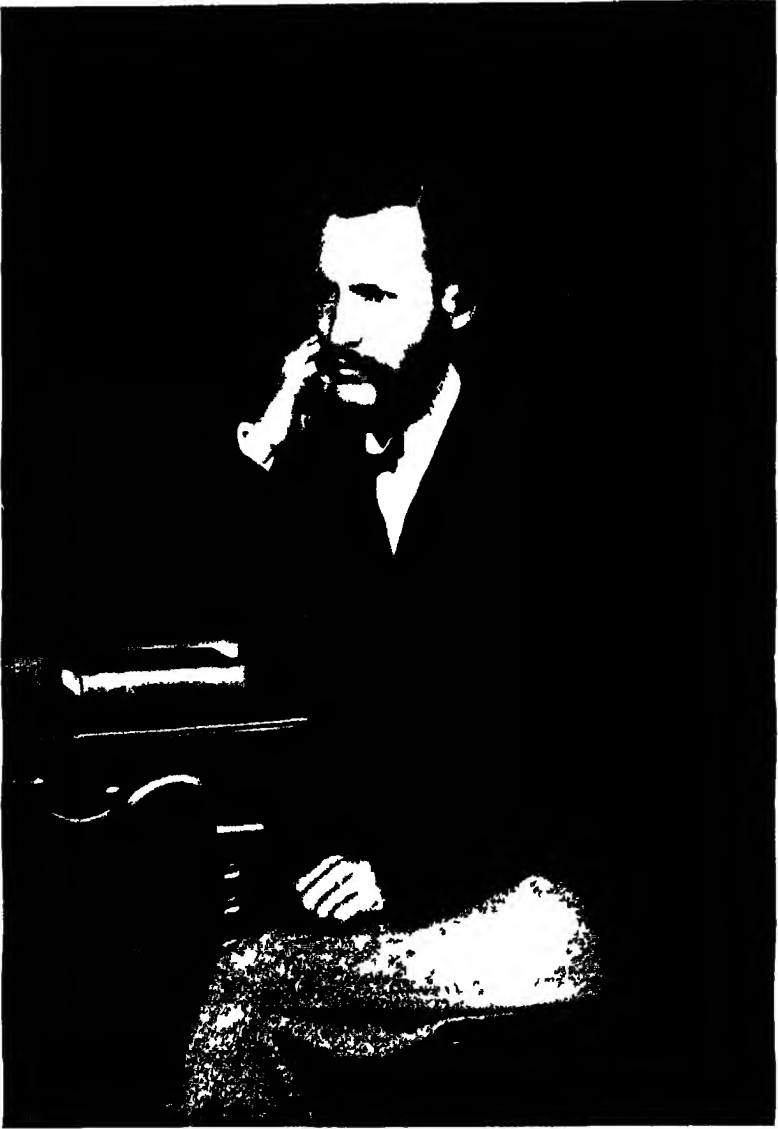
Annette had to become the manager of an Indian household and to dispense its hospitality. She set out to spend Henry's income for him—with his full consent—and to record every rupee, anna and pice of the spending. The books of account that she kept for this purpose she described as "The Tools of My Trade." In these she set out week by week every spending, combined the weekly totals into months and analysed each six months' expenditure under all its main headings of bazaar and stores, rent, service, garden, travelling, dress, furniture, charities and gifts, and other special items.

Henry's official income at Rangpur was 1,825 rupees a month, £2,160 a year, at ten rupees to the £. This was nett after deduction of contributions to the pension fund. It was free of income tax. In relation to the daily living expenses of food and rent and service this salary was ample. In most cases it was possible for those who received such salaries to save against their return to Britain.

But there were three items to be taken into account on the adverse side. First there were all the expenses of journeys and of change of station. Having a family in Bengal meant sending the mother and children for prolonged periods to hill stations. An even more serious burden was the frequent change of station, involving the buying and selling of furniture, carriages, horses and other equipment. All such buying and selling leads ultimately to loss.

Second, there was in Henry's case a continuing liability to help his older relations in Scotland. Something like one-seventh of his annual salary in 1878 and following years was spent on charities and gifts, and about half of this seventh was sent to Scotland to help in maintaining his mother, his brother David, and his sister Phemie.

Third, and affecting very directly both the cost of remittances in the present and the possibility of saving for a future in Britain, was the economic phenomenon known as the fall of the rupee. At the time of Henry's appointment to India and for some sixteen years later the rupee based on silver was the equivalent of two shillings; ten rupees would buy one pound. From 1873 onwards a world-wide fall in the value of silver in relation to gold began, and the rupee in relation to the pound sterling



*Henry at about 35*





### *Recording Angel*

became continually and disastrously less valuable. By 1880 it was worth no longer two shillings but about one shilling and eightpence, say twelve rupees to the pound. Five years later it had come down to one shilling and fourpence, or fifteen rupees to the pound, and still the fall continued till at one point, after Henry's retirement from India, the rupee was worth little more than one shilling. This, of course, had a very direct bearing on all remittances sent home, whether for the maintenance of older dependants or for the maintenance of children or as a means for saving for old age at home. The fall of the rupee entered vitally into some of the decisions which Henry and Annette came to make. But in the Rangpur days most of these decisions were still in the remote future.

There was, as Annette knew, a third side to her new profession. At the time of their interchange about smoking in March 1877, Henry had just had a step up in his profession, being gazetted a full judge as from March 6th. By this time also it was clear that Annette had embraced her new profession completely, in all its recognized branches. Henry and Annette's first child was born at Rangpur on July 10, 1877, and was named in Latin and Sanskrit Laetitia Santamani, happiness and jewel of tranquillity. She was named, not christened. None of Henry and Annette's children was ever baptized.

*I woke very early and as soon as it was light went into the nursery. . . . Seeing the love towards one grow is like standing in an early morning garden and seeing a whole pasture full of flowers open round one, . . .*

*I abhor the vacuum caused by your absence which neither equations nor Letty fills. . . .*

*I do not want anything except to be with you and to feel well again. . . .*

Annette from Shillong to Henry in Rangpur,  
October 15, September 26, October 2, 1879.

*Though Rangpur be a plain it is uphill work living in it.*

Henry from Rangpur to Annette in Shillong,  
August 4, 1879.

*I don't believe in any paid official ever winning the heart of the Bengalees.*

Henry from Rangpur to Annette in Shillong,  
August 24, 1879.

*I sometimes wonder how I believe anybody, seeing that so many cart-loads of lies have been shot into me for the last twenty years.*

Henry from Rangpur to Annette in Shillong,  
October 18, 1879.

*My dear Love: When you brought your family to Shillong did you ever suppose you were putting them into the trap it is.*

Annette from Shillong to Henry in Rangpur,  
October 7, 1879.

## Chapter IX

### THE FAMILY BEGINS AND SEPARATES

**L**AETITIA SANTAMANI, reduced to Letty or translated to Joy, was born at Rangpur, in the house beloved of cobras, on July 10, 1877. There followed, in the same house at Rangpur, a son, William Henry, born on March 5, 1879; he was William after his mother's father and Henry after his own father, but in early days he was "Bhai," or "Bhaia," representing either the Hindustani for brother or an ayah's attempt to say "boy." Third, on September 15, 1880, when Henry had moved to the only healthy and cheerful station of his career—at Bankipur near Patna—came another daughter, Annette Jeanie officially, Jeannette semi-officially, Tutu in practice.

For nearly six years from 1877 till the spring of 1883, when Henry took his second long furlough to Britain, this growing family were in India; in Rangpur and Bankipur on the river plains, or in hill refuges from heat and fever—at Darjeeling or Mussoorie in the Himalayas, at Shillong in the Assam hills. In this and the two following chapters this period of about six years is treated as a whole, presenting the background of European infancy in India. The background has six main features: Journeys; Partings; Sickness; Servants; Snakes and other plagues; and Station Society. Behind the background is always the idea of The Road Home.

The first three of these features—Journeys, Partings and Sickness—are relatively more prominent at Rangpur where Letty and Willy were born. Servants and Station Society are relatively more important at Bankipur where Tutu was born. But all five—and the remaining feature also of Snakes and other plagues—are common to those and other places. In illustrating this background, it has proved convenient to make a few references to later periods, particularly to the year 1885 which Henry and Annette spent at yet a third river station, Faridpur. It is the next district up the great river from Bakarganj and proved to have much in common both with Bakarganj and with Rangpur.

### *India Called Them*

The conditions under which Annette had to bring her children into the world can be illustrated by the fact that her monthly nurse on each occasion had to be brought from Calcutta. The journey in 1877 was elaborately organized. On June 27th a "chuprassi went with cart and palki to Kaliganj to meet Mrs. Toomey." On the following day Mrs. Toomey left Calcutta, and five days later duly made Rangpur. "Mrs. Toomey arrived at three in the morning; her cart in the evening." As the baby did not arrive till July 10th, on this occasion Mrs. Toomey was in good time. On the next occasion, though Mrs. Toomey had been summoned for March 1st, 1879, she arrived on March 6th, a day after the baby had been born. There is no mention of a doctor on either occasion, but one was available as part of the official medical service. Annette's accounts show a regular subscription of Rs. 210 per half-year for medical attendance at Rangpur. But this was only for the few. One of Henry's later letters, from Bankipur, records a visit from an Indian lady, Roma Bai, who had been collecting information as to the deaths of Indian mothers in unattended childbirth and contemplated proceeding to England to call attention to this evil.

The coming of children brought experience of a new kind of journey and longer partings, for Rangpur in hot weather was no place for them or their mother. So, when the first child Letty was two months old, Annette and she were sent off to Darjeeling—8,000 feet up in the Himalayas—and stayed there for six weeks. When the second child Willy was less than two months old, Annette and her two children were sent off to another hill station, Shillong, 5,000 feet up in Assam, and stayed there for more than six months. When the third child Tutu was born in September 1880, Henry was stationed in a healthier district at Bankipur and it seemed possible at first to avoid such expeditions. But the Indian climate had its way. After an attempt to combine health and companionship in a sea-voyage of the whole family to Australia in May and June of 1882, Annette was compelled by a serious illness of Tutu to surrender and took her off to Mussoorie. This was yet another hill station 7,000 feet up in the Himalayas. This time the two elder children were left behind under the charge of Henry and a German governess—the first of many *Fräuleins*—while Annette and Tutu were absent for 2½ months.

### *The Family Begins and Separates*

Each of these escapes to the hills involved a ferocious journey. Each involved a separation that was felt bitterly by both parties. Each led to a vigorous argument designed on Annette's side to shorten the separation by bringing Henry also to the hills, and on Henry's side to give reasons why he should stick it out in the plains: on the first of the three occasions Annette won, and on the last two Henry.

Annette's journey with her two-months-old baby from Rangpur to Darjeeling—about 100 miles as the crow flies—took all but five days. The narrow-gauge mountain railway to Darjeeling had not been constructed in 1877 and Rangpur itself was not on a railway in action. Annette's journey began at 1.30 a.m. by palki one Saturday morning in September, and ended just before midnight on Tuesday by tonga at Darjeeling. The servants had been sent ahead three days before Annette started.

Some of Henry's letters during this separation have been given in the last chapter to show the conditions of his work in the plains. The letters that follow show more of his work and how after argument he surrendered and went up to Darjeeling.

Rangpur, 1/10/77.

I am delighted to hear that Letty takes after me in the matter of losing her shoe. Perhaps some day she will lose one and a Prince will pick it up. . . . You need not be jealous of anything for I am only a machine and do little except cases.

Tuesday morning.

Rain, rain, rain. Very few servants have come but such as have appeared have got their wages.

6/10/77.

I am beginning to doubt the expediency of my coming up to Darjeeling this month, and would like to have your opinion on the subject. The facts are these, as we say in beginning our decisions.

In the first place I am well and have no need or wish to go to Darjeeling except to see you and Letty. . . .

Secondly my Sessions already go up to the 15th or 16th and I don't think I can leave this much before the 20th. It would take me about three days to go and three days to come down and I would have to be here on the 7th in time for the courts opening on the 8th. I would therefore not get much of the hills and would lose six days which I could apply to literary work.

## *India Called Them*

Thirdly I am going to give Rs. 100 to the Madras famine. My journey to and from Darjeeling would cost, including Mrs. Houghton's boarding charges, about rupees 300 and I doubt if it would be right to spend this just now if it can be avoided.

Fourthly there would be the pain of leaving you and Letty again.

Fifthly I want to look after the repairs of the house and garden and to finish Warren Hastings.

Sixthly I feel shy of the gay groups at Darjeeling.

. . . Now dear Annette please consider all these and let me know what you think. The reasons which weigh most with me are the second and third.

I miss you very much and would gladly join you but it would only be for a few days and I don't think it would be right at this time of public distress to spend £30 on one's personal gratification. With you the case is totally different for you had to go for your own health and that of the baby. I would far rather pay off the Academy than spend the money on palki daks.

And now to other matters. . . . The doctor was here last evening and we drew some resolutions for to-morrow's meeting.<sup>1</sup> I am to take the Chair and open proceedings. The vakils have already given me Rs. 110. The exodus has begun and many Babus have departed. The Sub-Judge brought his family here at considerable expense and is now taking them back in a boat the hire of which was 60 rupees! The Translator is not going home, because "God has blessed him with a son." The Nazir is doubtful about going, as his wife has prospects of replacing the child who died.

The mate bearer had strong fever last night and has had quinine and castor oil. The jungle is being cleared and the garden ploughed. I have been having a talk with the doctor about the Rangpur Drainage scheme. It seems it would come to Rs. 30,000. I think we should strain every nerve to get this. Livesay talks of a meeting but he is terribly slow. Perhaps Glazier will do more when he comes back. I said to the doctor we should subscribe a thousand rupees to the scheme if it was floated. Of course we would not pay the money all at once.

By the way, if the doctor gets the Campbell's Medical College where will you have Letty's brother brought forth? You might occupy yourself now in excogitating a name for him. I should like a name expressive of courage mental and physical, though Barnabas which means a son of consolation I believe, is good also. Paul is a good name.

<sup>1</sup> To raise funds for relief of famine in Madras.

## *The Family Begins and Separates*

I suppose the longer you stay in the hills the more likely the event above noticed will be. I was reading the life of Schopenhauer, or rather some account of him in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* last night. He maintained that a man got his intellect from his mother and his character from his father. When he was met by opposing instances he cynically replied *Pater semper incertus*.

Schopenhauer had a high idea of the importance of Latin and said the difference between a man who knew Latin and a man who did not was the difference between a man who knew how to read and a man who did not.

7/10/77.

I am going to our famine meeting in another hour when I will make such remarks as my nervousness allows me. I don't suppose we shall have a large meeting and our subscriptions will be but small but it is our duty to do what we can. The doctor is to move the first resolution, that for collecting subscriptions. Yes, my letters have been very stupid I know, but my head has been in a turmoil with work for the last fortnight. To-day I have not had much rest for I had to go to the Library to arrange about the meeting. I finished my first Sessions case yesterday and to-morrow the case is not a heavy one though the circumstances are painful being that of Collier's syce striking a man in the face and killing him. The cases extend up to the 16th inst. I am going to try to take them easy for it is the driving through them that hurts me. Four or five hours' work a day is good but sitting till six or seven p.m. knocks the life out of one. . . . The mate Bearer has had fever but is getting better.

8/10/77.

We had our Famine Meeting yesterday and the speeches were duly made. We collected Rs. 689 and hope to get much more. Livesay gave Rs. 100 and so did I.

I don't think of you as being gay at Darjeeling but I think of you as gaining strength there and as being in the right place there. I am sure our baby is better there than here and I want her to stay up all November and then be taken to Bogra and shown off. . . .

Would you like another servant? I could send you the Darwan. I am sorry to hear that the Ayah has not been behaving well. The doctor showed me your letter about his boys. . . . I hope he will get the Campbell's Medical School, but I fear not. His application, of course, is a secret. If I were up at Darjeeling just now I might perhaps speak a word to the L.G. on the subject. . . . But Sessions are inexorable.

P.S. Go about on pony back or in a carriage and take Letty with you. Swiss-milk her if she drains you too much.



## *India Called Them*

Between this letter and the next Henry received Annette's judgment on his reasons for not coming to Darjeeling. She rejected them all decisively and won her first—and last—victory in this matrimonial game. On the next occasion she got him to come half-way to meet her on the way down from Shillong. On the third occasion he stayed firmly in the plains to welcome her on return from Mussoorie. But her first time in Darjeeling was their first parting and Darjeeling was near—only two days' journey for Henry.

Rangpur, 19/10/77.

I think this is about my last day of work though I must go to-morrow too for an hour or two. I have finished my Sessions but I have a Criminal Appeal to-day. It is painful sometimes to think of the numbers of people one has to shut up in jail. . . .

To how many people must one appear stern and hateful and even unjust. The thought of being loved by everyone and of not having an enemy in the world is a dream which fades away very early. To be respected is a better and more attainable ambition and yet how many sweet and loveable natures fail of that. And even strong characters cannot always win respect, for poverty often covers them with ridicule and their own passions leap their barriers sometimes and make them do base things. I suppose we should try for nothing, neither for love nor for respect, but steer right onward and leave love and respect to flow towards you.

For the first time during these weary weeks I have read a little and last night I was much interested in three delightful gossiping articles in an old volume of the *Revue* about the Countess of Albany (the Pretender's wife) and Alfieri. You must read them when you come down. . . .

Our reforms and repairs are going on, and Beni is working hard to have everything ready for Madam. To-day we are removing the stores downstairs. The shelves will stay where they are and will be very useful for books, especially for Book Club books. A new fowl house is being made, i.e. a lattice work is being made in front of the pukka fowl house. The mehta is coming with his family to live in the compound and will have a house. The dhobi will also have a house and then another great reform is to be inaugurated, viz., the making of a privy for the servants. All the jungle in the compound has been cleared and the vegetable seeds are doing well.

I intend to travel by cart to Saidpur and to take Ram Yad with me. I shall drive to Nesbetganj, and then get on the cart.

## *The Family Begins and Separates*

21/10/77.

I hope to set out for Darjeeling and you to-morrow evening. The bearer accompanies me and I go to Parbatipur so as not to sponge too frequently on Mr. Jenner. . . .

I have been recreating myself with the perusal of Friendship's Garland. It is like anchovy toast, or the best taste of a medlar, sharp and invigorating. I think I shall order some things from the G.E., your letter notwithstanding. . . . We shall have to give some dinners during the cold weather. That second-class sherry of the G.E. is detestable.

I am delighted to hear of your resuming literature. If you and I both write, and if we lead calm and restful lives we may in time come to have influence, and be like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. I am persuaded that we are in our right place here, and that we should not be readily moved from it. We'll dwell apart like stars and not meddle with the jarring wheels of the Executive.

22/10/77.

I set off this evening at 7 p.m. I am travelling comfortably with my servant though, of course, he will only accompany me as far as Jalpaiguri and come on thereafter by cart. . . .

The Darwan will look after the alterations including the white-washing. . . . I have given him Rs. 100 and told him to pay the servants. . . .

I enclose a copy of my order to the G.E. Hotel. I am afraid you will think it rather magnificent but I like to have a full house even if we don't use the things.

Henry's journey to Darjeeling took him just over two days. He stayed ten days, during most of which Annette had fever, and so he was fortunately at hand to assist on the journey back by tonga, dandy, train, trolley and dog-cart. Her diary records:

- Nov. 4 Sun. Left Darjeeling in a tonga, with bearer and ayah. Roads rather alarming.
- 5 Mon. Left Kurseong. H. on pony, I in dandy via Pacheel, a fine road, half cart, half short cuts.
- 6 Tue. Left Siliguri at night—fever and sickness most of night. Letty slept cosily.
- 7 Wed. Very unwell. Left Jalpaiguri at 7 a.m. by train; Parbatipur by trolley at 2 p.m. (*cir.*) Bakarganj with Doctor G. by dog-cart, reached home at 8 p.m.

## *India Called Them*

After which it is not perhaps surprising that Annette should have spent the next four days in bed. But after that she was up and about "getting house in order which white-washers had inverted."

The journey of 100 miles to Darjeeling with one baby in 1877 had taken five days. The journey to Shillong two years later with two infants took twice as long, but was fortunately accompanied by Henry, while their house at Rangpur was occupied by a *locum tenens*, Mr. Campbell. As the crow flies, Shillong lies about 160 miles due east of Rangpur. To get there in 1879 involved first a fifty-mile journey by road to Dhubri on the Brahmaputra, crossing on the way by a ferry one of its major tributaries, the Teesta, as well as smaller rivers; second, a journey of about 150 miles by steamer up the Brahmaputra to Gauhati; last, another road journey of sixty miles to the foot of the Assam Hills, and up the hill to Shillong. Annette, with her two infants and a nurse, began this expedition on Thursday, May 1st, and reached Shillong ten days later, on Sunday, May 11th. The first part of the journey by road was done in palkis, covered sedan chairs each carried by four men. This took longer than planned, because at one of the intermediate stations no bearers were waiting, so the party had to spend the night there till bearers could be collected; they reached Dhubri, fifty miles from home, on the third day of travelling, and stayed another night. The next day, being Sunday, Annette paid calls on the station and at night boarded the steamer which after "a beautiful voyage up the river" delivered them two days later at Gauhati. The final road journey was accomplished in a variety of wheeled conveyances—tonga, tom-tom, tonga again and for one part of it, on the level, Henry and Annette's own trap which had been sent on in the charge of servants. Including a day spent in resting at Ningpo this sixty miles took the better part of five days. Annette summed up her experiences in her diary as follows:

The journey already formidable was made doubly so by the new metalling of the roads. The road itself is broad and safe though not to the timid eye. It was a most costly trip—some 600 Rupees in all and most fatiguing.

Annette may have had timid eyes but she was not a timid person: as she showed whenever occasion arose, she was as

### *The Family Begins and Separates*

nearly as possible fearless, physically and morally. That she did not exaggerate the risks of Indian travel in 1879 was shown by Henry's experiences when, after two months in Shillong, he left her and made his way back by himself to Rangpur. Though he left on July 21st it was the 28th before he was able to report his arrival.

Ningpo, 3 p.m., 21/7/79.

Just a line to say that we have arrived here safely. The tonga is comfortable and the road much better than when we came. But the joltings are considerable and I should have been sorry to have had a baby in my arms. We went over the bank once before getting out of Shillong and had to save ourselves by jumping out.

Rangpur, 28/7/79.

I got here last night at 1 a.m. after a very fatiguing journey. We got to Dhubri in one day and next morning at day-light I started in the little steamer for Kurigram. We got there in good time (9 a.m., I believe) but the tonga service was slow. The roads were bad, the horses not overgood and the distance too great; so we did not catch the ferry steamer or the train and had to cross in an *open* boat. It took us about two hours and I have seldom suffered more from the sun. At 4 or 5 I got to Gazirhat Bungalow and there I got cool and had some milk. At about 7 p.m. I started from there in a bullock cart and got safely here. The Darwan reports all well.

I had fever most of yesterday and this did not improve matters but to-day I am all right again. Campbell's tonga service would never do for a lady. You have to drive yourself. The tonga is uncovered except for a big umbrella held by the syce, and the road is bad. Once the horses got frightened, I think at the shadow of the umbrella, and went over the bank and firmly planted the tonga in the ditch. Nothing broke, however, and we did not fall down.

30/7/79.

I shall now try to write you a letter though I am still very shaky. I brought the fever with me from Gauhati but Campbell's tonga and the raft on the Teesta worsened matters. I did Cutcherry on the Monday well enough but the evening and night were not hilarious. There was a corner or a difficulty of some kind that I could not get round. In that I was less successful than the mosquitoes. They did after two or three hours reconnoitring, get round a corner or otherwise get the better of their enemy (as the Bengali word for curtains means) and effectually routed sleep. In the morning the doctor came

## *India Called Them*

and gave me medicine. I did not go to Court to-day and now I have no fever and am only weak. I have no doubt I shall be all right in a day or two.

Our garden is full of jungle, and I have ordered a clearance to be made. I fancy that the Darwan has many a story to tell me about the Campbells but that he suppresses them in merciful consideration to my weakness. What else Campbell has done I do not know but at all events he has left his mark for some time on the "Judicial." She is fat enough and all right in essentials but it seems that the whip broke and that Campbell jabbed her with the tin end. The result is that the respectable quadruped got two or three small sores about her back-bone which however have now healed. I have no doubt that she will henceforth have a low opinion of Joint Magistrate Judges.

I must say that as far as I have seen no damage of any kind has been done to our house by the Campbells, so I suppose she must be a good woman.

30/7/79.

. . . I am very glad to hear that you and the children are getting on so well and I hope and trust that you will not endanger your or their health by a premature return to Rangpur. It is not that I don't miss you and that I don't feel lonely here. But I want you not to run any more risks. Look at my own case. It was the sun on the 27th that brought out my fever but I got it at Gauhati if not on the road down, and yet as far as I know I committed no imprudence on the way. Then the road will get worse and the liability to fever greater every week until October. I quite enter into all you say about wishing to take charge of your home again, but your own and the children's health should take precedence over every other consideration.

As this letter of Henry's forecasts, escape from Shillong proved for Annette even more difficult than the journey there. But the account of this must be postponed till the story has been told of what she found there. Annette had taken herself and her babies to Shillong for health; she met nearly fatal disease.

Shortly after arriving in Shillong, Annette found herself laid low for nearly a week with violent fever, while Letty had dysenteric diarrhoea. Then came warning of a greater danger.

June

- 9 Mon. Got a circular of precautions about cholera.
- 13 Fri. Mrs. Ridgeway's little boy died of cholera.
- 14 Sat. Mrs. Badgeley's boy of 2 died of cholera. H. went to the funeral in the starlight.

### *The Family Begins and Separates*

Annette wrote across this page of her diary a note of how the disease came upon them.

Cholera is said to have been brought to the station by Captain A. of the Survey from Shillong. His coolies were dying on the road—4 in one bungalow compound died (at T.) and he nevertheless brought some express coolies into the station and with them cholera. It had spread on the 14th to Burra Pane where 7 people died—was in the regiment and bazaar.

For another week Annette, with her two precious babies at risk, went about the station, without doubt observing the prescribed precautions, but one of her rides took her through a wood where dead victims lay unburied, and on the night of Monday, June 23rd, she was taken ill. The account which later she wrote across two pages of her diary runs:

I had a terrible illness, Dr. O'Brien saying that for 14 days I lay in danger of my life. I lost all knowledge of things, and was full of delirious fancies. Captain Williamson sent me ice daily . . . and I was carefully nursed by my husband and Mrs. Toomey. They, I am thankful to say, escaped the contagion and my little children were also most mercifully preserved. This must have been due to the great care of the doctors and nurses in sanitary matters. Henry slept in my room through the whole illness.

Then on July 8th, a fortnight from the beginning:

About to-day recovered consciousness i.e. began to lose my delirium, and to know something of my illness of which my earliest notion had been that I had been poisoned.

Recovery once begun was rapid. A fortnight later, on July 21st, Henry felt able to leave her. In another fortnight Annette was playing badminton, and began to take part in all the life of the station: chaperoning a friend to a ball at the Assembly Rooms; riding and driving out and having occasional accidents; collecting station gossip and retailing it to Henry; reporting to him a not rare opinion that he was to be the Assam Valley judge; studying algebra; having trouble with the milk supply and her servants; and rejoicing in her children.

Shillong, 28/8/79.

There has been such a golmal here about the cow. The milkman took it away but the truth of the affair I cannot find out. However,

### *India Called Them*

I have told him that if he takes it without 15 days' notice I shall pay him nothing for this month. Does it not show the sweet disposition of the man that he never thought of the children? He seems to have quarrelled with the servants, but that is not my affair.

8/10/79.

I have been to the 42nd Badminton: played three games and won in all. Then most people migrated to the Res. and Cap. Williamson drove me over in his tandem. It is a pretty sight to see a tandem but does not seem particularly safe. Then we went and skated and very agreeable it is to feel one's skating "legs" on again. Then Capt. W. drove me home. I go to breakfast there to-morrow. I think I am very dissipated, do not you? But I shall return contentedly to my solitude a deux do not fear. I think I am on very good terms with most of Shillong now. . . .

15/10/79.

I awoke very early and as soon as it was light went into the nursery. I am fond of getting my chota hazree with the pets and of seeing their dewy newly opened eyes and of getting their pretty greetings. "Am mammako pia karta" sounds so sweet, and "Good morning, dear mamma" also. Seeing the love towards one grow is like standing in an early morning garden and seeing a whole pastureful of flowers open round one. One after one delicate blossom opens and every vacant space gets full of beauty. A little child is at first like a flowerless garden. . . . I think of pale dainty delicate flowers always in connection with Joy—when taken on her mental side—she has such sweet caressing ways. Thank goodness, she has riotous sturdy *peony* ways, too, but her little tendernesses are very graceful. Boy is better and active.—Dearest! please try not to dislike nurse. . . .

Your letter to-day makes me very happy—I too want to hold on as long as I can and be with you and the children as long as nature lets me. It was a curious chance which married us, was it not? Sceptics in many things we had somehow an increasing faith in one another.

The first fruit of this union of sceptics, the unbaptized 2½-year-old Letty, was already being taught to pray:

6/9/79.

I wish you had heard Joy to-night saying after me "I want to be a good girl and then Papa will love me." This is her first form of the

### *The Family Begins and Separates*

best use of prayer—aspersion. We sent you kisses and called “home” to convey them.

I have just worked out that sum.

$$\frac{3}{1-2x} - \frac{7}{1+2x} - \frac{4-20x}{4x^2-1} = 0$$

I get the answer 0 for the numerator all right but I do not see why you say sub: the den:—and do not think 0 remains. I think that no num: remaining the common den: “just falls away”—i.e.

$$\frac{0}{1-2x \times 1+2x \times 4x^2-1} = 0$$

*Sunday.* The first half of a note for Rs. 400 reached me to-day in an open envelope which looked as if it had never been closed. Thank you for it.

The unbaptized baby William, having escaped the name Barnabas which Henry had proposed for him eighteen months before he was born and having recovered from vaccination, was wholly unregenerate:

3 and 12/10/79.

Baby has recovered and is now screaming his delight at touching the fender, his screams being varied by violent rattling on your rattle. He is a most independent baby and suggests by his manner to me that he never had a mamma.

Don't expect to see an intellectual looking son. Prepare yourself for a red rough boy.

Annette at Shillong occupied herself also in less usual ways than baby worship and the social and domestic round. One occupation, as the letter just quoted shows, was algebra. She mixed kisses and equations in her letters to Henry, and he nobly, though not successfully, wrestled with the latter after his day's work in exhausting Rangpur. He always expressed great admiration for mathematical studies combined with inability for them.

Another occupation of Annette's was reading. The gaieties and gossip of Shillong left less time for that than usual, but she challenged Henry's description of Swift's Stella as a waiting-maid; she followed him in reading of Kingsley and Lecky. On



## *India Called Them*

*Villette* she passed the somewhat unusual judgment that it was "a veritable mine of instruction, comfort and guidance for women of small means and hard work."

Yet another activity was a letter to an Indian paper, *Brahmo Public Opinion*. Annette sent this first to Henry to send on for publication or not, as he thought right. He sent it on and it was published. The letter is not worth exhuming to-day, but the treatment of it illustrates the relations of Henry and Annette. On this, as on later occasions, he recognized her right of independent judgment on Indian problems, whether he agreed with that judgment or not. Annette, when she first came to India, had been at least as much on the side of Indians against alien Government as Henry. But she did not stay there as he did.

Shillong, /9/79.

. . . Bengalis ought to like those of us who work with them socially and I think do not dislike us—but it is not given to many to have the magnanimity Dr. Ghose once expressed to me—in answer to a remark that one could hardly expect the English to be liked in India. He said: "Why not? *We* know that they are as a race superior and can teach us much. Why not like them?" Envy and the censoriousness of (according to modern lights) inferiority, with the irritation of wanting power they could not yield—are enough to make the Calcutta Babus dislike us. I believe per contra Ishbanda and Kakina and other smaller Mofussil men would not feel these things and could I believe feel real friendship for English people who treat them as they deserve. But as for "liking," as we among ourselves use the word, the same class of Babus, do we like them and on your rule can they like us?

I don't mind confessing to you or them that I think their clamour for gov: appointments combined with their laziness in what concerns actual good—independence for themselves and commercial or other prosperity for their country—simply deserve contempt. The agitation seems to me to have originated in the idle newspaper set. Even the man who has gone to England, L. M. Ghosh is (probably) a comparatively unemployed man.

Henry's answer to this was one of firm dissent:

I don't quite agree with you about the Civil Service Agitation, England has been unjust, i.e. she has delayed justice. I look upon the

### *The Family Begins and Separates*

necessity for retrenchment as the most hopeful lever we have got for the raising of the Bengalees.

Henry and Annette came to differ ever more openly on racial issues. But because each recognized the right of the other to independent opinion, this difference never touched their feelings. On Annette's letter to *Brahmo Public Opinion*, Henry made plain that he did not agree with it all. "But it is far better, as Maurice once said, that contending principles and views should come out in the open instead of stabbing at one another in the dark or only skirmishing." And Annette, however she might differ from Henry on some public issues, never failed to play her part in keeping and adding to their hosts of Indian friends.

Annette's six months in Shillong were her first long separation from Henry. While she was throwing her renewed energies into the social life of the Assam Hills, he sweltered in the river plains. He made the most of the limited society of the station: of the collector Livesay, bachelor and *bon vivant*; of the missionary Ringwood with his string of children, his disregard for all events outside Rangpur and his sabbatarian objection to Sunday badminton; of the red-nosed traffic official R——, and his dull good wife, happy because she did not realize how hard was her lot; of the English doctor till he left, and thereafter of his Bengali successor who posed to Henry's Indian servants the embarrassing problem of whether they should call him a Sahib or a Babu. Henry tormented himself with wondering whether or not he should take determined steps to seek promotion or transfer from Rangpur, screwing himself up to write to Cockerell, the Secretary to the Bengal Government and then regretting that he had done so. He discussed anxiously with Annette how much they ought to pay the doctor who had seen her through the cholera; proposed Rs. 500, to which she countered with Rs. 300 as ample, and finally sent through her Rs. 400 which the doctor described as a "thumping fee." Henry was never one to save money except on himself.

He enjoyed himself improving the house and the garden against Annette's return and resumption of her sceptre. All the time he went on working without limit of hours when there was

## *India Called Them*

work to be done; making or assuming work for himself when there was none; rejoicing in trees and rivers and mountain views; alternating between exhaustion and recovery; reading, reading, reading; writing every day or twice a day to Annette.

Rangpur, 31/7/79.

Morning.

I am all right only I don't sleep, but that was to be expected. I shall get to Cutcherry and do some work.

I am glad to hear that Letty remembers her Papa. I am very glad to hear of her mixing with other children. Half of my miseries and some of my sins are due to solitary or at least purely family up-bringing. Mill and Buckle and other philosophers may say fine things about eccentricity but to ordinary mortals it is a cause of much sorrow.

Rangpur, 31/7/79.

Evening.

Still free from fever and beginning to enjoy life again. In evening I walked out and found the Rs just going out in their new purchased dog-cart, Mrs. R. looking blooming and Mr. R. blooming nowhere but at the tip of a Bardolphian nose. No change in Rangpur, says Mrs. R, except that it is duller than ever. Livesay, whom I have not seen, is reported to be fattening daily. The new doctor is a Bengali pure and simple, a mild gentleman who is afraid of his patients and talks in hyperboles, e.g. that there are two lacs of people in Dacca, that ten lacs attended Dr. Simpson's funeral there, etc. His wife is a half-wayhouse lady, i.e. speaks English and thinks Bengali. She has a fierce temper, as I suspect not a few of these Bengali matrons have. . . . By the way, I saw the Fisher baby at Dhubri and a very jolly baby she is now. The husband is a Cambridge man and talks nonsense. I did so too at his age, especially if there was a sapient Jude in the company. . . .

Rangpur is a hole, and no mistake. I awoke in my fever the other night and said: What—have I lost the Delectable Mountains and is it my fate again to drag my horse and myself by swamps and jungle and then to my cabin repair? Am I to have no sight of a church going belle (Selkirk improved) and no talk except shop?

But yet, hole though it is, or perhaps because it is, we have got fashioned to it somehow and I am doubtful about changing. Chiefly, I admit, because I don't think we should incur the expense it would involve. If you and the children keep well here, and we can get to Darjeeling easily, why should we remove? Let the voice of the mountain answer.

## *The Family Begins and Separates*

2/8/79.

I have got to the end of one week. I am all right after my fever and Campbell has left no arrears. These things and the fact that it is a beautiful moonlight night and that I have a good punkah pulled over me are all to the good. The other side of matters we won't go into lest it kick the beam. I suppose you and I feel about equally dull at this time (8 p.m.) and that we both try to grapple with our doom and to grin and bear. It's dogged as does it, says Trollope's labourer, and I am sure that poor Mrs. Toomey often acts on that maxim in the sweltering and enervating heats of Calcutta and among discouragements manifold. . . .

The jungle clearing proceeds vigorously. The two almond trees are noble as ever and the Lawn is in good order. . . .

Our sheep has lambed and it is reported and shrewdly suspected among the wise heads of the neighbourhood that our cow has wandered afield and that, Europa-like, she has found a bull. The Darwan will not commit himself on so important a matter. He only gives what he hears. The cow is certainly stout and as wicked as ever about running at one. . . .

4/8/79.

. . . The amiability of the Bengal Govt. exceeds belief. Without asking they have sent me a letter granting me four extra days. I must write and thank somebody. Have you begun Lecky yet. . . . I have taken over the book club but have not yet understood how it stands.

4/8/79.

To-day was a holiday, so not having enough to do I gave way to despondency and slumbered over the Academics. In the evening I roused myself and took a ride, and have come back somewhat refreshed.

Why should I laugh at you about Shillong? I myself feel like a reed shaken by the wind and don't know exactly what I want or what I should do. On the whole I think I shall write to Cockerell thanking him for giving me four more days, and saying I want a change of station in November. Though Rangpur be a plain it is uphill work living in it, and there is no prospect of improvement. The only changes are that Livesay gets fatter and R's nose gets redder. . . . Poor Nil Kemal has had another law suit decided against him; one that was begun in his father's time and was handed down to him as a melancholy heirloom. . . . He says it will go far to ruin him. Poor man, is he really only unfortunate, a just man struggling with adversity, or is he too a swamp-born serpent? . . .

## *India Called Them*

5/8/79.

I have written to Cockerell and asked him if I can have a change of appointment between this and the end of the year. I think that something will come of it. The dreariness of this place is really too dreadful and there is no prospect of improvement. . . .

7/8/79.

I dined with the R's last night. Livesay was there, and the evening was pleasantly spent. We chaffed Livesay about marriage, and did our best to be cheerful. We even talked of the Rhine and brought in the Sieben Gebirge to enliven us. . . .

7/8/79.

Soon as the evening shades prevail H. B. takes up the oft told tale. I rose, I breakfasted, I held court, I dined. That is the chronicle. . . .  
. . . It seems generally agreed that a lengthened stay in Rangpur affects the brain, so perhaps I had better get out of it before I attain to utter imbecility.

I have been reading the Tale of a Tub. Very clever but of forgotten interest. Strange that Swift should now be remembered chiefly for his love of a waiting-woman. It should be a good lesson to some of our arrogant geniuses to see that a great writer, i.e., a writer great in his day, is often immortalised by his folly, or at least by his heart, rather than by his intellect. Witness Abelard and Heloise, Dante and Beatrice, Petrarch and Laura, Swift and Stella, and perhaps others.

I have been reading Browning. He is a great man lost in mist. Why has he written so many puzzles? I do not think that one so hard to understand can be the fuller minstrel Tennyson prays for. The whole world seems to be still sitting in darkness waiting for illumination. Will it come in our day or will the clouds continue to lower for another century? We know not, but all the same we must plod on our dim and perilous way and beware of Will of the Wisps.

9/8/79.

The enclosed from Cockerell is not very satisfactory. I believe that if we are in earnest we should write to Sir Steuart himself or the Private Secretary Henry. I don't, however, know that husband of a fair wife, and I am too cowardly to be very anxious for a transfer. Like the lady in Tennyson's poem (The Earl?) I hate Rangpur as deep as hell but I love its coolness passing well. Every time a nice cool breeze blows, as it does just now, I say to myself Das Gute liegt so nahe, what a pity it would be if we went to Gya or some other hot place and the children drooped. I'll think no more and write

## *The Family Begins and Separates*

no more. If they offer me Calcutta or its neighbourhood I will accept but I won't disturb them by entreaties. . . .

Your friend Miss Dawson is quite mistaken about Mrs. Ward. She was the daughter of Edward Palmer the E. I. Railway Agent, who was a man who always had a big salary and was I fancy in good society for the last 30 years. Mrs. W. is clever and pushing. Her not being lady-like is natural, I fancy, and not the result of humble birth. She is what the French call a *maitresse femme* and caught Ward after he had flirted with many a Calcutta belle. . . .

I took a ride this morning by the *bhil*. The Lotuses in it were all aglow and presented a spectacle which perhaps Bengal only can furnish. They moved their green and red banners in the breeze, as if they were part of a half-submerged army—say that of Cambyses sinking in the Serbonian bog. I then went on to the Jail where I saw the Doctor Babu or the Doctor Sahib. Our servants don't know exactly what to call him, but if ever a Doctor looked as if he belonged to the genus Babu species Dacca and variety Christian, it is Ram Chunder, the stout and mild, who wears coloured spectacles. . . .

My poor Mother apparently will not give up the blessed hope of eternal damnation. See in Lecky an extraordinary passage from Peter Lombard showing how the sight of the damned will add to the pleasure of the saints.

I hope you have sent my watch down. The brass timepiece has failed and I have now no means of telling the time. . . . I hope that you enjoyed the dance. If you brought Miss Dawson here perhaps she would catch a collector. Livesay is I think Josh Sedley improved by foreign travel and by fifty years of the world's march. He said the other night that middle life was the happiest time because by that time you really came to know what is what in the way of Cookery! I said I know as little as ever, whereat he pitied me. I see Katherine Welsh has been condemned. I wonder if novel reading, say for instance the perusal of Miss Braddon's Henry Dunbar, suggested to her her crime.

Rangpur, 10/8/79.

. . . I have just read a fine article on Wordsworth by Matthew Arnold in Macmillan.

I went to-day to look at the Public Library. Our collections are only about Rs. 25 and we spend Rs. 20 on establishment. I am going to abolish the Librarian *pro tem.* and make my acting Translator sit in the Library and do the work of Librarian. . . .

Upashin has just come in to say that the cow has had a bull calf! Poor maligned creature, she has thought of the children after all. I

### *India Called Them*

don't think that the match of Miss S. and Mr. H. would be amiss. He is a bit of a snob, but I should say he was moral and good-natured, she can refine him, and he will bring vigour in to the co-partnery. I agree with George Eliot and do not see why vulgar men should not have ladylike wives. The latter may suffer but posterity gains. I wonder what sort of a man Nellie Akroyd has caught. Has she given up her play-acting then? I almost think there should be a law against people with children marrying again. It never answers apparently. While the custom lasts people should certainly be allowed to marry their sister-in-law, as it is the best chance that the children will be well treated. If your father or my uncle (Erskine) or Mr. New (of Evesham) or Mrs. Bayley of Shillong's father had not married again much sadness would have been saved.

Yes I think Shillong is better than Darjeeling, but an Assam judgeship would not, I think, suit me; however I would take it if they offered it to me. . . .

What a blessing that Mrs. R. is naturally so cheerful and that she is somewhat obtuse. Her thoughts run upon a change in the Native Members as a remedy for all things though nothing but a change in her husband's ways could give her real happiness.

Mrs. Goldie's is a melancholy letter. It is her nature and poor Jeannie's death only gave her a peg to hang her other sorrows on and was as it were a justification for her sadness to the world. . . . Surely with enough money and three nice daughters she ought to be moderately happy. Perhaps novel reading spoilt her as it has spoiled so many men and women too.

Rangpur, 10/8/79.

I have got through a lot of letters to-day. . . . I ventured to tell Mrs. Goldie that she was more melancholy than there was occasion for.

I read a very interesting article on Lessing in the Quarterly though I did fall asleep in the middle of it. . . .

Rangpur, 13/8/79.

. . . About a transfer, I doubt if anything will be done till Eden comes back. . . . I should like a jury district. Assam is no field unless they make me Chief Commissioner. As for making a reputation with the High Court, I could not be in a better place than Rangpur. Their annual report is in the press and we shall see if they say anything. Unfortunately my statement gave them much trouble.

I am meditating a very swell article called Bengal and the Bengalis, but have not yet turned the first sentence to my liking. I sometimes almost pant for what I imagine would be a wider sphere, and then

### *The Family Begins and Separates*

again I fall back and say, Too late, let me work the work before me and not be restless. Even poor Livesay was quite pathetic to-night about the dullness of Rangpur.

14/8/79.

. . . The west verandah will slip down by itself by the end of the rains and should not, I think, be rebuilt. It makes the drawing room what Sydney Smith said of Rogers' breakfast room—a place of darkness and gnashing of teeth. . . .

I had to take up a case to-day which was fixed for to-morrow as there was no other work. Greville says Lord Brougham complained that he had no work as Chancellor and added that he did not stand the prolixity of counsel but insisted on their speaking to the points about which he was in doubt. Perhaps Piaru Babu and others think I try too much to adjust the sights of their oratorical guns. N'importe, I get time for miscellaneous work, and for stirring up my Nazir. . . . I had to fill up an appointment lately and gave it to the man with the best certificates. My only doubt was how such a Phoenix could accept 15 a month. Well, he came this morning and confessed that in 1877 Mr. Westmacott had imprisoned him for a year for breach of trust and that he had not appealed! I told him I was very sorry but he must resign, and so he is gone. There was no merit in his confession for a disappointed candidate had peached to the head clerk. . . .

I took the Cabul out by the Burihat road this evening and past many green fields and bamhu clumps. Pretty but sad and unhomelike. One feels about Bengal as if one were travelling in the moon and seeing verdant fields, strange flowers, etc. We allow its beauty but long for something home brewed.

17/8/79.

. . . I think that to get a transfer we must go up and see the L. G. either during the pujas or at Christmas. . . . I am not aware that Assam is vacant or likely to be so. At most Ward would only give it up, I presume, for two years. Professionally the appointment would not suit me. . . . If I was not a Judge I should go to Assam and start a paper and keep rampant officials and tearing Tea Planters in check.

18/8/79.

Most of yesterday I spent in reading a Jar of Honey from Mount Hybla and Etna. The first is by Leigh Hunt and is delightful. Somehow one reads whatever Hunt wrote just as one reads everything of Lamb's and Matthew Arnold's. It is not that they are great or profound writers, but because they are charming.



## *India Called Them*

21/8/79.

The continued rain has made all our houses to leak. Our Courts, too, are leaking and the Courts can hardly sit in them. The compound is half full of water and everything is damp and mouldy. I dined with Livesay last night and we talked literature. He is glad to have somebody to talk to and so for that matter am I. . . .

I have given my decision in Nil Kemal Zohari's case and have given him and his co-heirs more than the officers who held the local enquiry proposed to allow him. They will get about Rs. 14000 which will be a small set off against the lac they have to pay in another case. However Rani Surramoy will, of course, appeal and goodness knows when the case will end. It began in 1852 and the dispute which led to it arose some five and twenty years before. And so time runs away. The heirlooms which a Bengali father leaves to his sons are lawsuits.

I am anxious to know what appointments will be made under the new rules about natives. I think it is a mistake to say they must all be under 25. If you can get a ripe and experienced man for the same money as a raw youth why not take the former? The matter of his pension can be arranged for.

I have been reading Greville—a delightful and useless book and one that is a graveller of Kings. I tremble when I think that the Queen must die and that the Prince of Wales must be our King. He would not last long, however.

22/8/79.

I have been dutifully trying the reduction of fraction question you sent me and the following is my solution.

My answer is  $\frac{2x+3}{3x-4}$

The answer according to you is  $\frac{2x+3}{x+1}$ . . . .

I am reading Theophrastus Such. He is good but one cannot read much of him at a time any more than one can take a bellyful of Liebig.

24/8/79.

I have been trying to make up my accounts but not very successfully. . . . It is a great compliment to you if people want us to judge Assam for I am sure no one would wish me to be substituted for Ward the musical, the contriver of theatricals, the player of cricket and polo, etc. . . . I am still clockless but have written for a railway guard's watch. When I am very rich I shall buy a keyless watch.

## *The Family Begins and Separates*

24/8/79.

. . . I have been reading to-day the life of David Hare. It is interesting and shows why he was liked by the Bengalees. Perhaps he is the only Englishman who has been genuinely liked by natives, at least by Bengalees. He retired from business in 1816 and instead of going home settled down in Calcutta and lived among the babus till he died in 1842. For thirty years he busied himself about their education though he himself was not learned. I don't believe in any paid official ever winning the heart of the Bengalees. They have one, I believe, but it beats slowly. I scout the notion that Hastings or Lawrence or Dalhousie was ever beloved by the natives or that ever they were personally attached to Lord William Bentinck. Watson was popular perhaps with teachers, but did the body of the natives know him?

I have been reading Seneca too, as much as the smallness of the print would allow. He is a noble sermoniser, and you know I want to be a Stoic.

Coming in to dinner this evening I was affected by seeing Letty's high chair, and wondered when she would fill it again.

25/8/79.

I read half of Julius Caesar last night. . . . I have been reading too Theophrastus Such. The first remark that occurs to me is that the author is sure of her public. No one not sure of being read would write in so antiquated a style and without insertion of any human interest. . . . The book is clever, of course, but oh, so melancholy. One would say it had been written in Rangpur and in the rains.

Morning, 26/8/79.

I feel bitter to-day because among other things the guard's watch I have just got from Hamilton has stopped and because etc., etc.

However, I shall go and bathe and breakfast and then to court where I shall take it out of the Pleaders. We shall not live forever in India. Even if we do not go home, we at least must die and so will not have the Bengali Babu always sitting like a nightmare on our souls. Meanwhile let us work while it is still day.

Evening, 26/8/79.

I have had a good dinner and a pint of claret and feel comfortable accordingly. How like an old bullock or a tired horse one feels on such occasions. Panem et somnum is almost all he seeks and the wisdom of ages hived up in books touches him not. He is on a lower level and leaves Shelley and Carlyle on the shelf. . . .

I had not such a hard day in court as I expected, though I did not

## *India Called Them*

leave till six. I sat and gossiped with the Nazir. I think that he is a good Babu, though of course if he had a case about half an acre of waste land he would lie like a Trooper. Query—does a Trooper lie, and if so what about.

27/8/79.

I have just been entertaining the Collector. We had a round of beef (salted here) and we discussed the bitterness of poets, the Bengalee character, etc. Really Livesay has a lot of literature and in Rangpur shines conspicuous. . . . I paid a visit to Livesay's tree to-night. It is one of the things that is almost worth a voyage to India to see. Canova said London Bridge was worth coming to England for, and I think Livesay's tree and that at Bogra worth coming to these places for. I am afraid that Livesay's tree is all the more beautiful in that it is not useful like that at Bogra.

I am busy putting my office in order, and am issuing all sorts of orders and making all kinds of changes. I feel that I ought to make my comparative leisure of use and that this is the fructiferous time of my stay in Rangpur. I feel oppressed by the loads of old papers in my record-room and am taking steps to reduce their amount. I also poke up my Nazir and my accountant and apply, as it were, mustard plasters to their sleek ribs. I should like them to say in future years Beeverij Sahib made this order. B. S. destroyed these papers. B. S. was a raging rhinoceros of the record room, a malleus munimentorum.

I shall try your sum, but not to-night; I am too full of beer and beef. Do I shock you ever with my letters? Pleasant for you to think that if I do W. H. and Letty will do so likewise, for they also are his off-spring, to quote St. Paul. The evil men do lives after them and when W. H. and Letty misbehave you will have to console yourself as my mother used to do by saying—it is the Beveridge spirit which they have inherited. H. B. his mark, may it long remain in his descendants though tempered by the sweet influence of the mother's side of the house. I am delighted to hear of Letty's joyousness and brightness. Poor Mrs. Ridsdale among her dogs and Mrs. Williamson among her knick-knacks must envy you. They are, however, free from many cares.

I am glad that you have seen Roma Bai again and that you have been able to help her. Poor woman, I hope she will find someone who will treat her better than Lord Oswald did Corinne. She is a native, but how much more interesting after all than Mrs. Ringwood, Ridsdale, Elder, Nicolas, Biggs, Roben, etc., etc. I have rhapsodised enough and will go to bed. . . .

I have been at work since five this morning. . . . I remember

### *The Family Begins and Separates*

hearing a preacher say that there were men of whom it might as certainly be predicted that they would do right as that the sun would pursue his path in the firmament. And I thought how fine it must be to know such men. Do they indeed exist, or is it not the case that the best of us are in Tennyson's words made up of "great bursts of heart and slips in sensual mire."

The utmost, I think, that one can feel certain about is that some men never will be happy if they do what is wrong. We could fancy Gladstone or Dr. Johnson or Thackeray or the old Pope in the Ring and the Book or Dean Stanley doing wrong, but we know that it is very unlikely and that at all events they must eventually come back to virtue and that they never will be happy away from the fold. To them Virtue or Nobleness may say in the words of Browning:

Mine thou wast, mine art and mine shalt be,  
Faithful or faithless, sealing up the sum  
Or lavish of my treasure, thou must come  
Back to the heart's place here I keep for thee.

All this refers to Theophrastus and your remarks thereon.

31/8/79.

I am afraid my mother is sinking somewhat. There is a beautiful passage in Dryden about a peaceful death in old age, comparing it to the hands of a clock standing still when it has run down. The simile, however, is not exact, for a clock goes on as strongly as ever till it stops. At least, I believe so. After all, perhaps he is right. He is referring to the old clocks with pendulums, and they I believe gradually come to a stop.

I have been thinking of the time when you should come down.

There followed in this same letter nine pages of discussion of difficulties and alternative plans for Annette's journey, including the typical happy thought that she might continue on the river steamer all the way down to Calcutta so as to get the children photographed. The letter, before it ended, included a promise to "try your sums hereafter," an observation that a logical and consistent clergyman must be a Quietist or a Torquemada or perhaps both, and enclosure of the *Hindu Patriot* "with a wicked motive, namely to show that the High Court decisions are reversed sometimes."

The stream of letters from Rangpur continued with comment on people, scenery and books. One of them marked a fresh

### *India Called Them*

stage in Annette's growing deafness—acceptance of an ear-trumpet.

6/9/79.

I have made a suitable reply to Chunder, though effusive letters (except from my wife, and she only gives me one once a year or so) make me feel for defensive weapons, and cause me to set my face like flint.

Yesterday evening Mrs. R. gave me a drive. I wish it had been the Shillong Mrs. R. for our Rangpur one is not amusing, poor soul. She is a good woman, though, and steps bravely through life. I believe she will live and die without ever knowing that she has had a hard and not happy life. Virgil talks about those who would be fortunate if they knew their blessings. There are some people who would be unfortunate if they knew their ills.

I have been reading Kingsley's life, a fine brave man if ever there was one, but not intellectually strong enough for the 19th century. One thinks of him as a gallant mounted on a bad horse, or a brave foot soldier armed with obsolete weapons. I do not think we can ever have a really strong man unless he give up the absurdity of praising the past at the expense of the present. Any man who writes novels or history to show that the old times were better than the present is out of the swim, and wrong utterly.

I see two buffaloes grazing in our compound; don't you think we should draw the line at *buffaloes*?

I have a long case to try to-morrow, and I rather dread this for I get frightfully weak at times and feel that I have to hold on by my teeth, so to speak. . . . My cases pursue me to bed and so I do not get fully restored by morning. Thank goodness the work is light. I am so glad we did not leave Rangpur a year ago. This slack time, and the experience I have gained, have enabled me to make many reforms. . . .

I have been reading Kingsley's life again. Some of it is very fine, and indeed it is almost too spirit-stirring at times, and I am glad to take refuge in sober law. He was a gallant spirit and on the whole he had a happy life.

The inscription which he, I believe, chose for his tombstone, had reference to his wife (Argenon Lavington of Yeast) and was Amavimus, amamus, amabimus.

8/9/79.

My record keeper told me this morning that on Saturday, while they were pursuing their work of arranging the records, a large cobra came out of one of the bundles.

### *The Family Begins and Separates*

I have been to see the doctor, who looks very well; he is coming to dinner to-night. He has brought your trumpet; it is ugly but very powerful. The tube is telescopic and when drawn out the instrument is like a small speaking trumpet. I think it will often be useful to you in the dark or when listening to servants.

12/9/79.

We have had still more rain. Yesterday the sweeper and Jogaru killed a very large cobra at the door of the billiard room. . . .

I do not think you should hope that we have seen the last of Rangpur. It is not unlikely that we may be here for many a day yet.

20/9/79.

. . . I have made up my mind to economise in horse flesh and so I have sent the Cabul down to Calcutta to be sold. I felt sorry when he turned his shapely form to go out of the compound, and I gave him a farewell pat, but now he has gone and I feel relieved. I never could have ridden him in company with you and he costs us 30 or 40 a month. . . .

I have just heard that Maclean is going into the High Court and so have written to Sir Steuart and Mr. Cockerell asking for the 24 Parganas; is not that pleading? . . .

I quite approve of your going to the fancy ball as Queen Elizabeth, which Henry should I appear as—Henry IV, my idol, Henry Beauclerc, whom I fain would be, Henry VII whose rigorous economy I imitate, Henry VIII the Defender of the Faith, or Henry of Portugal the navigator? I suppose you would not like to go as Susanna. Did you ever read the postscript to Burns' song to Anna. I dare not give the first four lines to you, for happily, and not, as the French has it, unhappily, it is not a sin for me to come and see you. I shall give you the last four, however:

She is the sunshine o' my e'e  
To live but her I canna,  
Had I on earth but wishes three,  
The first should be Susanna.

Love and kisses from your eccentric, moody and sometimes bitter but always affectionate husband.

Rangpur, 14/9/79.

. . . We had a most successful meeting at the public library yesterday. We abolished the newspapers and resolved to spend Rs. 500 at once in the purchase of new books. The funds came partly

### *India Called Them*

from the Temple Fund and partly from savings. . . . I have recommended to the High Court that one of my Munsiffs should be pensioned off or reduced to Rs. 200 a month. He is P. K. R's Brother, whom I have found incorrigibly stupid and idle. I do not expect that the High Court will take my word for this, so I am probably in for a long report. . . .

The girls' School is doing well, I hear, but the bills have not come back and I shall have to advance the pay this month. We really must get a better cart for the girls.

15/9/79.

Kinchinjunga was beautiful this morning, and as I walked up to the school to get a better view of him (it is the best view in the station) the north breeze blew crisply in my face. Rangpur may perhaps boast of two sights: The biggest mountain in the world and the biggest river in the Eastern Hemisphere. I suppose it is folly, but at times I wish I had not written to Cockerell. However, it is very likely that we shall not get a transfer. . . .

Your mention of Swift led me to look at Foster. He scouts the waiting-maid story but Foster was an ass, though like that quadruped, he was laborious. I have resolved to send the book to you. Please study page 104 containing Swift's Resolutions. . . .

Thursday night, 16/9/79.

. . . I finished my Sessions to-day. The last case was a robbery committed on an unfortunate Demerara cooly. He had been out there for fifteen years and returned with a little money, including ten sovereigns, to enter on the Rangpur ryot's Paradise of having two wives. In this district a man sets up a second wife just as a prosperous man at home sets up a carriage or a yacht.

The sessions has been a bad one for convictions, for nearly every case has fallen through more or less.

The doctor is busy, for this is feverish weather. . . .

18/9/79.

. . . I have had a holiday to-day and have spent part of it in reading Plutarch's Marcus Cato (a delightful biography) and Seneca's *De Constantia Sapientis*. To-morrow is a holiday also. . . . I have withdrawn my application for transfer, i.e., I have said if there be a vacancy in or near Calcutta I would apply, but that I did not like the suspense. I am sorry to hear that you too sleep badly.

Rangpur, 22/9/79.

I miss you dreadfully but you are better out of this sultry heat. It was almost impossible to sleep last night.

### *The Family Begins and Separates*

The strain of being apart, with exhausting work and heat for Henry, with recurring anxieties as to the children's health for Annette, with criss-cross argument as to dates and ways of travelling one way or another, brought sometimes a fradge of temper. In the middle of September Henry suddenly broke the loving interchange between Rangpur and Shillong by a letter setting out three causes of vexation to him, which caused Annette, who took Henry always with absorbing seriousness, to sit up half the night answering him and to catch a cold that developed into fever. The three causes of vexation were that Annette had agreed to stay at Shillong as Henry desired but had been led to do so by the advice of someone else; that she had suggested that Henry might enjoy Shillong; that she had had an imbroglio with the servants.

The sympathies of posterity will probably be with Annette on this occasion, as they will be with Henry on the earring-tobacco controversy. Henry made amends for his letter of vexations in his usual manner; that is to say, first by writing another letter on the same day full of love and caresses, making no reference at all to any earlier letter; second, by admitting later that he was wrongly vexed and had been unjust; third, by maintaining that nevertheless he was glad that he had written, and adding a characteristic truth of self-depreciation.

I am not sorry I wrote. It was ever so much better to tell you my irritation than to nurse it and keep it warm. I was just thinking to-day how much I owe to you in many ways. How much of any improvement that may have been made in myself I owe to you. . . .

Blake is one of the few poets whom Henry and Annette hardly ever mentioned. But they acted faithfully on his precept of saying to one another as friends exactly what they thought and felt at every moment of their lives.

I was angry with my friend  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe,  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

Through all this exchange of letters between Rangpur and Shillong run the recurrent themes of unhappiness in separation and planning how to come together again.



### *India Called Them*

With Annette this took always the form of persuading Henry to join her in the hills. He was due for a month's holiday from the middle of October. She baited her hook for him with the children, and seized on any illness of his as an argument.

Shillong, Thursday, 9/10/79.

Your letter of to-day makes me only the more eager to be with you, and if possible *here*. Surely I cannot love you as I do and not comfort you and at least I can nurse you. I am sure you have many a worry and many a weary year to look back at—but you must not look back—you must luxuriate in to-day and our love and our children's charms and the good helpful work you do. I don't like to look back when I think of you for I cannot think without pain of you to whom love is cheerfulness and indeed without which you suffer more than most men, I think—alone and hard worked and torturing yourself as I know how you can torture yourself.

Dr. O'Brien begged me to get you here or to Darjeeling if possible for he said you could not but suffer after the terrible strain you had here. If you come you shall do nothing you dislike—you shall lie in the verandah and Letty shall improve your mind and read to you, while you look—you must—with a little pride on your son—rolling and kicking on the ground.

This was followed, later on that same day, by another letter with plans for coming up ("If you took the Raja's steamer—and paid for the coal—you could be here by the 29th") and with a rejection of Henry's argument that he must shorten his holiday and stay at Rangpur to supervise some examinations.

I am somewhat shy of putting forward those exams. as a reason why you must shorten your holiday, for the idea of your month being cut short 5 days for them seems to strike most people here as absurd. Don't think I say "absurd." Do let Mr. Livesay and the Bengali examiners do it. . . .

I will be very selfish and tell you that I shall feel it hard if on account of work which it is not an imperative duty to do you leave us alone another month. . . . If no duty interferes, cannot you yield a little to give me pleasure?

Please do not be angry with me. I am very much disappointed, and you must know it is very painful to me to be in the cheerful society of the place and to think of you alone.

Alternatively, Annette put up pleas to be allowed to make





### *The Family Begins and Separates*

early return to Rangpur. But in the end she had to stay longer than she wished. In August she was planning return by the end of September.

After dinner, Friday, 22/8/79.

. . . I hope you were not vexed by my to-day's liberation of my soul. I have studied the almanac to-day to find that it is still five weeks till Sept. 29th, the last tonga in Sep. and the first I suppose we may take even if all goes well. . . .

Indeed I think it quite wrong that I should be so long away from my post. When I come I will bring in all the outsiders I can to dine and sleep and then will also have a native gathering—so long promised and deferred.

When September came there was still hope of mid-October:

6/9/79.

My inexorable almanac tells me that I have still seven weeks of this solitude to get through. I do not like it at all.

When October came the doctor forbade any move as early as October 20th for fear of fever on the road. It was, in the end, nine weeks, not seven, from September 6th before Annette was home again. Well might she write as she did on October 6th and 7th:

I have ceased to believe that I shall ever see you again.

My dear Love: When you brought your family to Shillong did you ever suppose you were putting them into the trap it is? . . .

Henry, for his part, while sometimes he played with the thought of returning to Shillong, was more concerned to find reasons for not doing so and to devise means of bringing Annette and the children safely back to Rangpur. He wrote pages and pages of alternative suggestions as to ways and date of travel, returning always to the same point, that he wanted Annette as soon as possible and that she must not come too soon for safety from accidents on the road and from fever. His experience had led him to distrust tongas, which on a hill road might spill the family over the bank, and he gravely suggested a bullock-cart. Annette, dutifully investigating this suggestion, emphasized its slowness: "The notion of at least twelve hours daily for three days in a bullock-garry is alarming." She explored the possibility

### *India Called Them*

of a "dhoolie" as an alternative to a tonga. She laid the whole station under willing tribute to help her.

Henry, after four years only of this marriage, had not yet realized all that there was to Annette. She undertook to get the family down the hill in one way or another and what she undertook she was certain to accomplish. She wanted Henry at Shillong, not because she could not manage the journey down without him, but because she thought it would be good for him and because she was never happy alone.

But he was tired and dreading the long journey. Even when for a moment he got so far as saying that he would come if Annette really thought he should, he gave reasons against it.

Rangpur, 15/10/79.

Of course neither the journey to Shillong nor the stay there for three or four days will do me any good and I will be one more person to be got down the hill. Still I will try to come if you really think I should.

The gaieties of Shillong I can hardly hope to share in and I am too tired physically and mentally to care for going much into society. I am quite contented that I have got an efficient representative in yourself, and I am sure that I make a much more favourable impression on people by my absence than my presence—that is when I have my better half to appear for me. . . .

Even in India the cold weather comes at last and families are re-united. By the second week of October Henry's letters began to take another note.

Rangpur, Sunday, 12/10/79.

I think the cold weather must be really coming. I feel so brisk and even rollicking. I cannot dance for I have a boil on my left leg. My right arm is still Rustumized<sup>1</sup> and I have a touch of earache but for all that I am jolly as if I had drunk Wine of Cyprus. In the first place I am relieved of suspense, I have made up my mind about Shillong. I am not to go there but am to meet you at Dhubri or Gauhati. . . . You must go to the Ball and bring me a stock of gossip sufficient to last all the winter. *Of course* it never has occurred to you even for a moment to think that by being alone for four months or so you have had some respite from the cares of maternity and that William Henry's

<sup>1</sup> Rustum was one of the horses towards whom Henry, in his own words, never liked to prætermitt the duty of giving exercise.

### *The Family Begins and Separates*

successor will be all the better for starting on his road a month or two later than he otherwise might have done. It is only your wicked husband that thinks of these things and takes a perverse pleasure in mentioning them to his Susannah.

Mrs. Ringwood's son and heir has come after five daughters. Ringwood called on me to-day, and would you believe it, he had never heard of the Cabul Massacre! Can the force of seclusion further go. It is literally true. He took up Punch and seeing a picture of the British Lion and the Afghan wolves asked what it referred to. . . . I invited him to Badminton this evening but he declined on evangelical principles.

Tell Letty that Papa is going to make her such a magnificent swing. A sal post from the west verandah is to be stretched between the almond trees and provided with hooks. Everybody says I have improved the garden so much, but it is your approval that I want most. Perhaps though you may not praise everything you will adopt the maxim of Hindu law and say *Factum valet quod non fieri debuit*.

Another thing that is cheering me is that the big Jalpaiguri case is to be finished this week. . . . It is such a relief to think that I shall not have to retain in my mind all the damnable lies that have been told up to the 1st December.

I have quite made up my mind that I am not to get the twenty-four Parganas. Nor do I want them. Three years more and we will go home for good and make sand houses with the children on the sea-shore. . . .

So you are younger for Letty, are you? I have no doubt of it. You are younger too for your husband, for his wickedness is ever new. I am sure I am younger for you, my dear, and have no wish that the world should come to an end. I only wish that there was more of it and yet H. and Annette must in good time give place and let Letty and W. H. come forward to the footlights and play their parts. Bless them, they'll have their troubles and trials but the world will be older and wiser and both stage and audience will be improved.

The big Jalpaiguri case which Henry mentioned in this letter proved to be one of the most important in his career. It concerned a disputed succession to a very large estate. It involved questions of Hindu law, as to the conditions on which a valid adoption of an heir could be made, and questions of fact, giving unlimited scope to the fancy of witnesses. The estate itself was so large that the case was practically certain to be carried up not only to the

### *India Called Them*

High Court in Calcutta, but beyond that to the Privy Council in London.

The counsel on one side, Durga Mohan Das, had been one of the principal supporters of Annette's school; he was an eminent lawyer and a man of great public spirit, but Henry found him in court "decidedly a heavy gentleman, prone to waste the court's time and his client's money by asking useless questions"; Henry refused to burden his notes with the answers and shamelessly wrote one of his letters to Annette while sitting in Cutcherry. Characteristically, Henry gave up holidays in order to go on with the case continuously and save money to the parties. Characteristically, having made up his mind that much of the evidence had been invented to suit the defendant's case, he said so before calling on the plaintiff to answer, and so shortened the case still further. Yet in spite of this it took more than a month from start to finish in Rangpur. Thereafter it was carried to the High Court, who reversed Henry's decision, and thence to the Privy Council who, nearly four years later, reversed the High Court decision and restored that made by Henry.

Rangpur, 11/10/79.

I have arranged to hear the big Jalpaiguri case on Monday and to go on with it into the holidays. This will save the parties' time and money (D. M. D. gets Rs. 200 a day) and will give the pujas for the consideration of my judgment.

Thursday night, 16/10/79.

D. M. D. has had another day's innings and he has pounded me with authorities. He is ponderous, but he is conscientious and thorough and I have learnt much from him. We spar occasionally, and I am sure he thinks me too quick. *Magnum confecimus aequor* and possibly he may finish to-morrow. The case is really deeply interesting, and I am glad that I will have the holidays to think about it. I was fearful if I postponed it that I might be transferred and that the Cause Celebre might thus fall to my successor. It will go up even into the Queen's Chambers, for one party or other is sure to carry it to the Privy Council. The estate is an impartible Raj, i.e., the right of primogeniture prevails in it and there are many questions about adoption involved. Shall I be gifted to decide it rightly? . . .

Will you be able to bring any orchids or ferns from Shillong; my last hobby, you know, is gardening. . . . I am quite ashamed of my

### *The Family Begins and Separates*

handwriting but my fingers refuse to do anything better. Your beautiful handwriting puts me to shame altogether. I am an old bullock, you know, and cannot improve. D. M. D.'s eloquence kept me till 5 and then a criminal appeal kept me till 6.30 so that I am pumped out. . . .

I have just returned from the Jail, a spurt of energy having induced me to go there and write a long minute about Hospital accommodation, etc.

I cannot give up my faith in Mrs. Sherer. Many years ago I used to flirt with her, i.e., I was her devoted slave (unknown to her) for two or three days, played chess with her, and in my coxcombry allowed her to beat me. She is charming but Joe is a tinkling cymbal. I haven't taken in all your nice letter yet. I'll read it again when my bearer is washing my feet and fomenting that wretched boil of mine. It is the biggest I have had.

Saturday 2.30 a.m., 18/10/79.

I arise from dreams of D. M. D. and now sit down to write to thee.

The man of three letters above noted still continues his bombardment. Daily he casteth up a wall of books in front of me and every now and then he hurls one at me and begs (*preces erant sed quibus contradici non potuit*) me to keep it for his sake. That is, I am to take it to my home and my bosom and beguile my after-dinner moments with its artless prattle. O dura ilia causicorum. However, we choked off D. M. D. a little. He wanted to argue that an only son could be adopted and this Court had fortunately read two rulings of the High Court which say he cannot and so it put them on its head as a Cadi does with the Koran and said it was concluded by authority. Grand phrase that, and one which I recommend you to use to Letty. Well D. M. D. finishes to-day I believe. No doubt when a man gets 200 a day and can spin a thing out by reading interminable extracts he is loath to stop. His words sound silvery in his ears and though his voice may get *ropy* he thinks of the *rupi* and goes on. Let us have another glass, he says to himself, as Cotton Mather used to say to his congregation. There is a jolly amount of lying in the case and I believe there are two small boys in it who owe their birth to Mr. Justice Markby. I believe that gentleman was most respectable and I should not like to hurt the feelings of Mrs. Markby but yet I believe him to be the father of two Kuch boys named Babua and Jogishwar. In other words, because Mr. Markby decided that an only son could not be adopted and because the boy in the case before me was an only son, his friends straight away supplied him with two brothers and now we have the



## *India Called Them*

young gentlemen's horoscopes and a variety of interesting particulars about them; their mother, too, i.e., the adopted boy's mother, coming forward and describing their birth, etc.; the fact being that they never existed. Of course, please don't mention this for adhuc sub judice lis est and the respectable D. M. D. is gravely going to stand sponsor for the boys to-day and perhaps to shed a tear over their untimely deaths. I have got a suspicion though that he is rather shy about the boys and would gladly drop them if he could. No doubt he suspects that the Court is sceptical.

Really I sometimes wonder how I believe anybody, seeing that so many cart loads of lies have been shot into me for the last twenty years.

Perhaps, however, stinking lies, like stinking manure, eventuate in the white flowers of truth.

Now I think I shall go to bed again.

Sunday, 19/10/79.

D. M. D. still continues his silver speech (Rs. 200 and a day and 6 hours makes about a rupee for every two minutes). Another week of him would drive me into the arms of Keshub Babu. He says he will finish in an hour or two to-morrow, but I doubt it. He has not treated us to any eloquence yet, has not held up the spectacle of the poor fatherless not to say brotherless boy called upon at the age of 15 to contend for his right against a cruel grand-uncle who is not at all interesting. The boy himself being as white as milk or at least as cream and as pretty a youth as ever told a lie or was devoured by parasites. D. M. D. I fear has no eloquence and no wit. He is vigorous and honest and laborious. Nay, he is also learned, but arrowy intellect has not been vouchsafed to him. I think that in another life he must have been an elephant.

Tuesday, 21/10/79.

The big case is at an end and nothing remains except for me to write and deliver my judgment. At the conclusion of D. M. D.'s address yesterday I said I had a few words to say before the Pff. replied. I then said there were some points on which I had great doubts and others on which I had no doubts at all. The points I had doubts about were the law points and those I had no doubts about were the questions of fact. I then said that I had no doubt that Rajishwar was an only son and that I believed Mr. Justice Markby to be the real father of his two brothers. This was received in solemn silence. I then said that I utterly disbelieved the story of the concealed adoption by the Rajah, i.e., the adoption four years before he proclaimed it.

### *The Family Begins and Separates*

In consequence of these remarks the Plaintiff's reply was cut very short for he had only to answer D. M. D.'s speech about the law-points and so the whole thing was over by 3 o'clock, instead of lasting till to-day as was expected.

I now feel as a clock may feel which has been too tightly wound up. I would like to run down again and do no more serious work except writing the judgment till 17 November.

I dined with the Doctor last night. D. M. D. got upwards of Rs. 6000 for the Jalpaiguri case. He has taken a house at Darjeeling for the holidays and went off there yesterday.

Even if Govt. does sanction my being at rest on the tenth, I hope you will be here then as the Station will be full and we all weary for you. Nobody likes me as a bachelor. Morose old stick, always in cutcherry. . . .

. . . To-morrow we all go to Gobind Babu's and Jundi Babu's to the puja celebrations.

4 p.m., 21/10/79.

If you saw what an undertaking the putting up of the cross timber for the swing is! It is a Brobdignagian swing fit for the children of the Titans or for the infant Zeus on Mount Ida.

I am quite excited to think we shall meet so soon. I shall be at Gauhati by the 29th or 30th and you will be there a day or two afterwards. Perhaps we will stay there for a day or two and admire Gauhati.

I have been reading the Crofton Boys. What a length Miss Martineau must have travelled after that.

I began my judgment in the Jalpaiguri case to-day but did not do much more than find the proper spelling of the Pff's name—Pharindra (lord of serpents). Phar is the hood of the cobra and Phari is a serpent.

22/10/79.

I have been pounding away all day at my judgment and have finished the first issue (six and twenty pages). The second will be begun to-morrow—that wretched Durga Puja will interfere with my working at night. . . .

23/10/79.

We spent a stupid night yesterday but I suppose we did our duty. I was not in bed till one and then I awoke at 3 with earache and wrote at my judgment for an hour. Then I went to bed again and did not get up till near 10. . . .

## *India Called Them*

I have written about 80 pages of a judgment and upward of 10,000 words. . . .

Dhubri, 25/10/79.

My Darling wife,

I caught your letter in its flight yesterday for though you said you would write to Dhubri the old familiar Rangpur came to your pen. . . .

I came from Rangpur with Mr. Kennedy and his fiancée. Just as he arrived here he got a telegram, I believe, that he had just been appointed an Extra Assistant Commissioner. He is an expensive young man and I doubt if his somewhat stupid Ethel will long enchain him. I am to dine with Dr. Slane to-night.

I have been reading Ranke's Popes. What a fine fellow Sixtus 5th was. It was he, as you no doubt know, who put up the obelisk before St. Peter's. . . .

Before leaving Rangpur I finished my judgment, eighty pages about, and nearly 11 or 13,000 words. It wants correction though. I am not eager to go to Calcutta except to have the children photographed. And in any circumstances I want you to come here first. We will enjoy ourselves at Rangpur. To me it will be all abundant happiness to have you beside me again and to talk to you. I am quite wearied of this loneliness, and pity the Doctor from the bottom of my soul.

I would like you to stay here for a day on your way home. The big river is so invigorating, so enlarging a sight, and the Dak Bungalow has about the nicest position in Dhubri. . . . Abir missed the steamer yesterday but escaped a reproof by his alacrity in travelling all last night with two coolies and arriving here at 10 a.m. I think the air of this place must do me good though I feel very weak. That case and judgment have taken it out of me.

Your loving husband who hopes soon  
to hold you in his arms.

While Henry wrestled with the Jalpaiguri case all through October, Annette's time at Shillong became ever more completely filled by the children and minor distractions. Henry sent her a box of fineries from Calcutta and she gloated over them:

13/10/79.

I don't think I am a vain woman—what have I to be vain of—but I should be vain if you were here to praise me in my pretty clothes. Everything in my box has passed a committee of Mrs. Boyd, Miss Dawson and Miss Elder as being more charming than the last.

### *The Family Begins and Separates*

But when two days later Henry proposed to follow up the fineries with some volumes of Comte, Annette asked him to keep Comte in Rangpur; she had no time for reading.

There were innumerable social activities, working up to the fancy dress ball about which Henry had given advice; in the end Annette went not as Queen Elizabeth but as the Old Woman who lived in a Shoe, in a costume of her own devising. She made an impression and was ingenuously pleased with herself.

Shillong. 23/10/79

I came home from the Fancy Ball at three this morning so you may be sure that I was well amused. . . . When I went I was so tired from packing and taking Joy out that I thought I should not stay. To my surprise I was much congratulated on my dress, the work of my own hands, and I believe my powder and rouge were not unbecoming. I think of rouging regularly for I see others so much improved that I think I too should be by it.

True to her character of Recording Angel she gave Henry a list of all the leading ladies and their costumes.

There was an exciting reminder of India outside ballrooms when the 44th Regiment which had left Shillong unexpectedly returned there. It came back to be used in dealing with trouble in the Naga Hills when a British official and his escort were ambushed and killed.

There was a limitless ocean of station gossip and a recurrent falling out of station ladies with one another. Mrs. X had been to call on Mrs. W and being told that the latter was at tiffin and so not able to see her, declared that she would never call there again, or on any one else in Shillong. Young Mrs. S was dying to go to the Fancy Dress Ball but for some reason known only to herself refused Mrs. R's invitation to take her, and thereafter by various emissaries sent hints to Annette to get her there. Mrs. Z had had a "mishap" and Mrs. Y was "put out" with Annette because Annette, knowing of this, had not thought fit to publish it to and through Mrs. Y. "Have I not given you a petty picture of ladies' life in Shillong?" asked Annette of Henry, to whom all this was duly related.

Two years before, at Darjeeling, Annette had succeeded in getting Henry up to the hills for ten days. At Shillong she failed,

### *India Called Them*

as she was to fail three years later at Mussoorie. Henry dug himself into his work and found one reason after another for evading Shillong. Some of these reasons, like desire to do prompt justice in the Jalpaiguri case, were good. Others, like the assumed obligation of supervising examinations in his holidays, were less good; the Lieutenant-Governor, when appealed to, confirmed the view taken by Annette that this work could be left to the Collector of the station and need not shorten the judge's holiday.

But by that time the die had been cast against Henry's coming to Shillong, and Annette's plans for getting down the hill from it were complete. On the last day of October, after playing a final match at badminton at 8 a.m., she, with the children, was driven by a friend down the worst part of the road and safely reached the river, Gauhati, and Henry, on the following day; this remained to them always a memorable reunion. Four more days saw them home together, by a new route from Dhubri, and after a journey in which first the river steamer and then the ferry steamer had stuck on a bank.

Just before leaving Shillong, Annette had received a telegram for Henry offering the chance of a new station.

Shillong, Wednesday, 29/10/79.

My Dearest Love,

As I dined to-night with the Boyds came a messenger with the enclosed telegram. I am longing to know what you will say because you must not yield to the sense of quiet at home in Rangpur without thinking of other things—such as your work, your professional education and advancement and the desirability of a change of district for these objects. If you go I must stay a short time behind and pack up and sell off. I am going to ask Mr. Ridsdale how long he thinks the Govt. can wait for an answer, for, of course, I should like to talk it over with you before you decide pro or con. I am to play my third match to-morrow at 8 a.m., so there will not be much delay in sending the telegram to you if I wait to see Mr. Ridsdale first. I am letting off my wish to chat with you in this preliminary gossip on the subject. I am inclined to think we should go—but then you know I cannot judge. It might be a better step *Higher* than from Rangpur.

Goodnight, my dear Henry.

## *The Family Begins and Separates*

Thursday, 30/10/79.

The last coolies have gone. I have played another badminton match and won again.

I have been hearing a great deal about Patna and think we should not refuse it. Of course there are things to regret on leaving Rangpur—shame to us would it be if it were not so—but there are many more reasons for going than for staying. May I tell you what seem to me some of these reasons.

Patna is regarded as promotion.

It is a jury district.

It has many interests from its size, its college and its position which we have not had in Rangpur.

There must be some society in the college people which we should like.

It is dryer than Rangpur.

It will give you a new kind of work.

As we have asked to be moved, and have had this apparently first-rate station offered it would seem capricious and rather fractious not to take it.

Etc., Etc.

On the other side are reasons against, but only one troubles me. I want to know how you are, if you feel in spirits to take up new work and oh! dear! to see you so much. I am ready to attack Patna or any other place with you and will take all the trouble off your hands. It is, I suppose, one of the best and favourite stations in Bengal. Let us go, dear!

I am longing for news of your steamer and you.

Your loving wife who will write you no  
more letters.

At their meeting in Gauhati, Henry and Annette accepted Patna, which meant that they went to live at Bankipur, on the Upper Ganges, no longer in Lower Bengal. On the day after her return to Rangpur, Annette started packing to leave.

*I do not believe that our servants are worse than others except, of course, that you cannot expect a Khitmutgar to do Khansamah's work.*

Henry from Rangpur to Annette in Shillong,  
September 3, 1879.

*It is better to be deceived and treated with ingratitude a hundred times than to be spared such evils by having a dead heart.*

Henry to Annette, September 7, 1879.

*It was very ugly to see the quantities of snakes which were swimming about in the water with their heads just above.*

Annette describing floods at Faridpur to her  
daughter Letty, September 18, 1885.

*The leeches sit in waiting even on my doorstep.*

Annette from Mussoorie to Henry in Bankipur,  
August 29, 1882.

*Everybody looks ill except Slack. The Doctor seems at death's door. Coxhead looks used up and worn out, Rattray debile and Dawson yellow. And yet they are a very temperate and quiet living station.*

Henry from Bogra to Annette in Darjeeling,  
January 23, 1877.

*Another "cross" of Calcutta.*

Annette in her Diary, on the beginning of her  
deafness, June 14, 1874.

## Chapter X

### SERVANTS, SNAKES AND SICKNESS

ANNETTE began her Indian housekeeping for Henry at the end of 1876 with twenty-one servants, but this number soon proved insufficient. It included only one syce and one grasscutter, for they had at first only one horse, the slow and stately "Judicial" quadruped who figures in so many of Henry's letters. She was a brown waler mare bought in Calcutta for Rs. 300 (say £25), with a new phaeton, which with harness, freight to Rangpur and sundries ran to Rs. 1,131 (say £94).

Before long Annette's diary records: "Temptation came in the shape of Mr. E. B. Baker's horses. Put down our name for two—a Cabul and a Burman." They could not get just the horses that they wanted, but they did acquire three more ponies, "Daisy," "Rustum" and a "Cabul." This meant three more syces and two more grass-cutters. By June 1878 their establishment had risen to twenty-six.

This was for the quiet station of Rangpur and for a family still small. Four years later at Bankipur, with three children and a full social life, Annette found herself dealing with a staff of thirty-nine. She recorded their pay, their promotions and back-slidings, their goings and comings, month by month, in account books which she described as "The Tools of my Trade." She recorded also in most cases their names, though sometimes she got no further in description than "3 undermen" in the flower garden; "2 under men" in the vegetable garden; and "bearer's son-in-law," with otherwise unspecified duties. She added up their total pay each month—about Rs. 150 for the original twenty-one and nearly Rs. 200 for the later twenty-six at Rangpur, nearly Rs. 250 for the thirty-nine at Bankipur. Taking the rupee at 1s. 8d. or twelve to the £ at that time, these monthly totals work out at £12 10s., £16 10s. and £21. The servants, though no doubt they had some garden produce, did not get full board in addition. They lived at home or in servant's quarters in the compound and they bought their rice. Annette's original



## *India Called Them*

twenty-one servants cost her about what one servant would cost in Britain to-day.

In a time and country like post-war Britain when inability to obtain domestic help of any kind, even for old people or invalids or mothers of small children, presents itself to those who have had servants formerly as one of the major difficulties of life, the Indian establishments of the past appear fantastic. What were all these people doing?

The material for answering this question is presented in the accompanying table, which sets out Annette's establishment, practically as she set it out, with position, name, date of entering service and monthly wage rate in rupees, for the first half of 1882 when she and Henry had been at Bankipur for two years. I have put the servants in Annette's order, adding only an English equivalent for the servant's occupation where necessary. I have set out, on each side of this list for Bankipur, the smaller establishments which Annette had at Rangpur and later at Faridpur.

The first point emerging from this table is that a large proportion of the staff were outside servants. Ten of the thirty-nine were engaged in the garden and another nine were looking after livestock; this includes the "old woman" whose duty, as appears from a note of Annette's, was grinding the horses' corn. A number of the others were meeting needs which in organized Western communities are met otherwise than by domestic service. The bhesti, the mehta, and the chokidar were substitutes for a water supply, sanitation, and police; the washerman, tailor and carpenter were substitutes for outside contractors. The servants occupied with livestock or in the garden were largely wanted for the same reason. Syces and grasscutters were needed because there were no trams or omnibuses or subways. Some of the gardeners, in addition to supplying vegetables, had the subsidiary but essential task of pulling punkahs in hot weather—in default of air-conditioning and electric fans. The fowlman and cowman were needed as the means to getting essential food. In Rangpur Henry and Annette kept their own sheep; in Bankipur they joined a Mutton Club. Milk and bread and meat did not come daily to the door in by-gone Bengal.

The organization of the milk supply for young children was a

### *Servants, Snakes and Sickness*

recurrent problem. In their own station Henry and Annette always kept their own cow. A letter of Henry's from Rangpur given in the last chapter recognizes the thoughtfulness of this animal in meeting with a bull and so producing a calf and a supply of milk for the children when they should return from the hills. But as the family grew this needed supplementation. Before returning from Shillong Annette sent the following instruction through Henry to Ramyad the faithful bearer:

Find two good cows to give (with our cow's milk) four seers of milk at least. I will buy or hire on seeing them. The owners must bring the cows to be milked in the compound. *This is very important.*

When they went away from their station or changed stations the milk supply and other services had to be organized afresh. Thus some years later a move of the children to Darjeeling involved sending a party of servants in advance: Annette noted with thankfulness how Ali Jan the khansamah met them at the door of their Darjeeling house with a good cow and a good ayah.

But supply problems were not confined to milk. In some places other daily essentials were hard to come by. The arrangements for mutton at Rangpur and Bankipur have been noted above. At Faridpur both meat and bread had to be brought from Calcutta, and coal, being unobtainable, was replaced by charcoal made locally. For drinking, water had to be brought from the river some distance away, and boiled and filtered.

An Indian household had to be self-supplying in many essential ways, as a household in Britain need not be. And it had to be such that essential services could be rendered when duty or the climate involved journeys. When Henry went visiting in his district he had normally to be accompanied or preceded by servants to prepare lodging and meals. When Annette went off to Mussoorie with the youngest child, though she was going to stay in a hotel, she took with her three servants—Sirdar, khitmutgar, and ayah.

There was yet another feature of life in the Indian Civil Service calling for mention here. This was the perpetual change of stations, with its accompaniments of finding houses, buying and selling furniture, packing and unpacking, making weary, incon-

### *India Called Them*

venient journeys. The expense of these periodical uprootings, as has been stated, was for Henry and Annette an appreciable element in their budget. The weariness would have been insupportable without unlimited help from servants.

The army of servants were not of equal responsibility or permanence. There were a few of special position who became pillars of the establishment and trusted friends of their employer. Such was Bisheshwar (also known as Hurree), the Sirdar or major-domo, who had been with Henry before his first marriage and who died in 1886 in his service. Such was Ramyad, the bearer, sometimes described as the mate, who had also been with Henry before his first marriage, saw him out to the end of his service in India and returned to look after him when, many years later, he paid his sardar's pilgrimage to India. Such was Gogram, the darwan, who had been with Annette before her marriage in the school in Baniapookur Lane. Such was the khansamah Ali Jan who, though absent for part of the time in Faridpur, returned to Henry in Calcutta. Such was Bogmonia the ayah, who, though a woman, was always one of the most highly paid servants.

The largest wage recorded by Annette was for the dhobi or launderer, Rs. 21, but it seems probable that, from this, he would have to pay for assistants. The highest individual rates at Bankipur were Rs. 14 for Kedar Bux the coachman; Rs. 12 for Ali Jan the khansamah or butler; Rs. 12 for Phojdar Ram the bawachi or cook; Rs. 10 each for Bisheshwar the Sirdar or major-domo, for Tunnykhan the dirzee or tailor, for Punnoo the mistree or joiner, and for Bogmonia the ayah or nurse. The lowest monthly rates ran down to Rs. 3 for the bearer's son-in-law, and Rs. 2 for a chokra or boy, who not unreasonably left to better himself, and for the "old woman" who presumably could not do so. The commonest out-door rate, as for grooms, sweepers and water-carriers, was Rs. 6, or taking the rupee at rs. 8d., say £12 a year. The Rs. 12 a month paid to the most responsible servants corresponded to about £24 a year.

Unlimited domestic service was needed to make work and life possible for a European and his family in an unorganized, unmechanized community. Servants were there in plenty; they cost very little per head; they took the place inefficiently of the

### *Servants, Snakes and Sickness*

missing water supply, sanitation, metalled roads, mechanical transport and shops of Western communities. But by-gone Bengal was not only a place of deficiencies. It was inhabited also by a variety of positive pests. It was a place of perpetual lassitude and recurrent sickness.

The most dramatic of the pests were the snakes. The prevalence of these in Rangpur and their special fondness for the judge's house have been noted already; cobras crop up repeatedly in the letters and the diary of that time. They made repellent appearances later at Faridpur. They do not seem to be mentioned at Bankipur.

Snakes, however exciting, caused less inconvenience and fewer deaths than the mosquito, whose connection with malaria was not then understood. And a notable variety of minor pests presented themselves in one place or another.

At Faridpur, for instance, there was a plague of "jungly pigs," wild animals destructive of crops and quite ready to attack men. Sometimes the Government offered a reward for the destruction of these pigs. When Government parsimony stopped this, Annette persuaded Henry to step into the breach; she explained to the children that the Government had no money to spare for killing pigs in 1885, because they had spent so much in preparing for war with Russia. A letter of hers to Letty in England dealing with the pigs describes also an appearance of snakes.

Faridpur, 18/9/85.

I am writing before mail day because of the floods which make the trains very uncertain. Indeed we do not know when letters will come or when they will reach Calcutta. I told you that Papa had given me 100 rupees to spend on having wild pigs killed. We are just at the end of the money and I think when it is quite gone there will have been 75 pigs killed. Perhaps we need not have given such large rewards and then we should have had more pigs killed. . . . To-day when I got up there was a cart standing before the door with four pigs on it waiting for me to see. The man who brought them has killed a great many and he has bought himself a new gun, a nice little light gun out of the money.

. . . A very curious thing has happened about the floods. The railway embankment is higher than most of the land on either side. All kinds of animals have consequently taken refuge on it the papers

### *India Called Them*

say and especially immense numbers of snakes. A man tried to photograph them in one place but it was not comfortable to be so near and he did not succeed. A person who came here by train three days ago told me it was very ugly to see the quantities of snakes which were swimming about in the water with their heads just above.

Another of Annette's letters of this time gave a catalogue of unpleasant denizens of Faridpur; jungly pigs, a wild buffalo, a wild cat, a porcupine, a mad jackal and a cobra in the thatch. "Do you like all these dreadful stories?" she asked her son of six. He probably did.

At Rangpur one October there was a plague of pariah dogs going mad in the hot weather. Henry found it his duty to borrow a gun and go out to shoot them. One of the beasts made its way into the house upstairs.

At Bankipur the only plague recorded by Annette is scorpions, though there was also a rumour that the youngest child had been bitten by a spider.

At Mussoorie there were flies, fleas and, most abundantly, leeches. Annette told her daughter Letty all about them:

Mussoorie, 26/8/82.

My dear Little Woman,

I am going to write you a long letter so I have taken a large sheet of paper. I am going to tell you about a walk I went this afternoon to a place called "Mossy Falls." Miss Poppy Bean came at four o'clock to go with me. Tutu and I got into the dandy and Miss Poppy walked beside us downhill over stones till we came to a place where it said "Tivoli Gardens. No dogs admitted." Well! we had no dogs with us so we went on. I got out of the dandy and went down a winding road down and down amongst beautiful ferns and under trees. At length we came to a gate where we found a man who asked us to pay eight annas each which of course we did and then we entered the Tivoli Gardens. At first they seemed just like the rest of the jungle and we wondered why we were asked to pay eight annas. Then we passed a large cage made of wood which we were told was a leopard's cage and there was a smaller box close to the larger with a quantity of bones in it. Still we went on and still down and it became very warm. Then we turned a corner and came to a place where there was a building and where were several tennis and badminton courts. Here Tutu and the bearer and the dandy stayed but Miss Poppy and I went

### *Servants, Snakes and Sickness*

on still down towards the sound of water. I cannot tell you how pretty the place was—the banks covered with the loveliest flowers and leaves and down at the bottom the clear water running amongst grey stones. We found seats and bridges and a little house to sit in—and we went along the bank of the stream always admiring the lovely things we saw growing round us. We did not see a living creature—not even a bird. At last we came to the “Mossy Falls”—a place where a number of little waterfalls ran down a mossy bank to the larger stream. It is a very pretty place and the ferns and flowers and leaves are most beautiful. We gathered some and then climbed the hill to Tutu. She was playing with some dahlias and very happy.

We sat down to rest a little and Miss Poppy said to me—“Look how I have cut myself” and showed me that just above her boot her stocking was covered with blood. I said to her “It is not a cut, it is a leech-bite,” and there was a black leech in the middle of the red spot. I looked and saw several other leeches hanging round her boot and then I looked at my own feet. Oh! Letty! what did I see? I had on shoes, not boots, and I saw quantities of black leeches biting me—nasty fat black creatures. I could not touch them so I stretched my feet out and called the bearer. So Sirdar came and a jampani and pulled off all they could see and then Miss Poppy and I went into a room and took off our stockings and found many more. I was bitten in twenty-five places and these bled a great deal though they did not hurt at all. . . .

There followed in the letter an account with diagrams of what leeches looked like and how they walked.

Their head and tail are their legs. You must ask Papa to explain this and ask him if he remembers one walking about on Mamma's bed when you were born! Pussy brought him up from the garden we thought.

Henry and Annette, as their lives showed, were both people of magnificent natural healthfulness. He lived to near the end of his 93rd year, she well into her 87th year. Each of them later, in England, was unceasingly energetic, never idle, and practically never unwell.

In India, Annette was recurrently ailing herself, though she never let this interfere with the fullest possible domestic, social and literary life. She was continually having one child or another laid low by fever or dysentery. She had in her time to fight three

### *India Called Them*

pitched battles with death—one for herself at Shillong in 1879; one for her younger son in Calcutta and Arrah in 1885–86; one for her elder son in Darjeeling in 1889. She had to set herself with all her might to bring her younger daughter round to health at Mussoorie in 1882. Of the six members of the family, only Henry himself and the first-born, Letty, were not at one time or other in desperate danger through disease in India. Two of the three pitched battles with death and the fight for her younger daughter at Mussoorie, Annette won; one of the three she seemed to win at first, but she lost it in the end. The first of these battles—at Shillong against cholera—has been recorded already. The others will be spoken of in their place.

Annette herself, in her first years in Calcutta, suffered the beginning of a disability of deafness which grew on her remorselessly but which she never allowed to defeat her. When she first came to India her hearing was normal; she had a beautiful voice and she sang. Half-way through her second year in India, when she was nearly 32, came the illness and the threatened abscess in her left ear which she described in her diary as another cross of Calcutta. When, on her honeymoon, she reached England in May 1875 almost her first visit was to an aurist. This was the beginning of a struggle carried on for eleven years. Whenever she was in England she spent much time and money in visiting nasal and aural surgeons; they hurt her horribly, and in the end they could not check the growing deafness. By 35 she had begun to use ear-trumpets. By 40 her jampani at Mussoorie had realized that she could not hear a runaway horse coming. By 43 she felt her deafness extremely at a party. After one last savage bout with an aurist in her 44th year she gave up the chase. She resigned herself to trumpets of growing complexity. She never resigned herself to being cut off by her disability from the fullest social life. Annette's growing deafness was a fact which for all practical purposes she disregarded.

Life in India for those who ruled it has always been life with trains of servants. Henry and Annette were people of relatively humble position; their domestic forces were modest as compared with others recorded in India. When in 1774 Sir Phillip Francis went to Calcutta as one of the governing Council, he and his

### *Servants, Snakes and Sickness*

brother-in-law Macrobie had 110 servants to wait on a family of four people. Macrobie found both their number and their behaviour monstrous; he attributed to the servants every bad quality except drunkenness and insolence.

To superintend this tribe of devils and their separate departments we have a monstrous collection of banyans chief and subordinate with their trains of clerks, who fill a large room and are constantly employed in controlling or rather conniving at one another's accounts.<sup>1</sup>

The picture presented by Henry's establishments a hundred years later, with Annette as her own banyan, is different and more pleasant. There were, of course, occasional troubles with the servants. Some of these troubles were of a type peculiar to India. "I told Sirdar," wrote Annette in one of her letters from Mussoorie, "about Mahomad Nowab's death"—through eating opium. "He said: everyone eats opium—our dhobi and his brother and his little boy. I said I would cut their pay if I saw its results (as I once did with Putty)."

There was another occasion, in Darjeeling, when two of Annette's servants—Kaloo and Kanchi—already man and wife by their old lights, both embraced Christianity and were married again in church. Annette took much trouble to impress upon them the duties of their new condition—including the spending of Sunday mornings at church rather than in the bazaar. Shortly after, Kanchi appeared in tears with a battered bleeding face. "This is Kaloo's work," said Annette, and sent a message that, if he laid hands again on Kanchi, she would hand him over to the police. Later it appeared that Kanchi as well as Kaloo had had a stick and that the subject of their quarrel was the question of going to church.

There might be other troubles of a more familiar type, though arising out of Indian conditions. At one moment of her stay in Shillong Annette found herself with no table servant, cook or masalchi. There was a quarrel between the Indian servants she had taken with her from Rangpur and her English nurse; the servants became disrespectful and were dismissed summarily by Annette. This imbroglio was one of three causes of vexation

<sup>1</sup> *Echoes from Old Calcutta*, by H. E. Busteed. Macrobie's letter describing his staff is at p. 126 of the second edition. (Thacker Spink, 1888.)



### *India Called Them*

which Henry discovered at that time in Annette, but as he pointed out himself it was all but inevitable. The servants had expected to be away from their Rangpur homes for two or three months at most; by Annette's illness and convalescence they were kept for six months. Through the same cause they were forced to submit to the monstrous regiment of a woman. "You may depend upon it," wrote Henry, "that your nurse is in some shape or other at the bottom of your troubles. It may not be her fault, but her position is a difficult one, and natives are unwilling enough to be under a woman of any sort and still more when she is a collateral and not Sahib's wife." There followed from Henry some characteristic comments on the master and servant relation in general, an attempted quotation from Kingsley's *Life* which he was reading at the moment, and an artful but genuine piece of self-depreciation.

Rangpur, 3/9/79.

The relationship of Master and Servant has perhaps from the earliest times been out of joint. We cannot make it work smoothly and can only hope that in the course of centuries it may be put into good order. There is a certain amount of non-naturalness about it and it is not founded on any bed-rock.

I don't believe that our servants are worse than others except, of course, that you cannot expect a Khitmutgar to do Khansamah's work.

7/9/79.

Kingsley has a passage about treating servants only as such and recognising only the cash nexus which I should have liked to have quoted to you apropos of Mrs. Nation and Mrs. Ridsdale but I cannot find it. Remember that it is better to be deceived and treated with ingratitude a hundred times than to be spared such evils by having a *dead heart*.

26/9/79.

I have always said, dearest, that your standard is too high. It is a fault, if it be one, of your sex and it is also the fault of all men who have not mixed much with the world. In many cases as in yours the fault comes from exceptional purity. You have never grievously sinned or erred yourself, and so have the severity of an Ithuriel. Your poor husband has committed so many sins and errors that he has no difficulty in putting himself in the place of the most abandoned rascal and looking at the thing from his point of view.

### *Servants, Snakes and Sickness*

He knows that if he had been a Bengali taken from his home and kept there against his wish and subjected to two persons of an inferior sex (his view) he would have been irritated and possibly disrespectful. He knows, too, at the same time that when he became disrespectful his mistress was right in dismissing him.

The servant imbroglio was settled happily by mutual concessions. Henry admitted to Annette, not without trepidation, that when the servants got back to Rangpur from the hills he had paid them their travelling expenses. Annette raised no objection and even offered to take back the cook if Henry wished it. But Henry had no such wish:

26/9/79.

I always knew that the man was bad and I quite adhere to my description of him as an insolent rascal. But I was sorry for him, and still more for his son. . . . I am sure that they could not have wanted to be dismissed and to be left hundreds of miles from their home and on top of a hill.

This trouble at Shillong arose from exceptional causes. The general relation of master and servant in Henry and Annette's household was easy and stable. This applied not only to five or six special servants who became lasting friends. It was their experience with most servants. When Henry and Annette left Bankipur and India on furlough in the spring of 1883, practically the whole of their vast domestic staff had been with them for three years at least. The relation even to purely casual employees, like the jampanies who carried Annette and her youngest daughter about in Mussoorie, had its pleasant features.

Mussoorie, 31/8/82.

One of my jampanies has had bad fever so I sent this afternoon and bought quinine for him. He seemed so grateful. I like my jampanies though they are I suppose ignorant creatures. They have very kindly ways to Tutu and today when I was alone and I did not hear a horse coming behind me, my escort ran forward so politely and motioned me aside, I said "Accha" to him and he gave me such a smile and salaam. It is nothing in words but the protecting kindness of the ugly little man touched me. He knew I could not hear. He is a queer mortal and is made to wait on us, all day, by the others. He fetches hot water, runs errands for the servants and guards the

### *India Called Them*

verandah. Today as we neared home I saw him run up a bank (without an order) and gather a bunch of single dahlias for Tutu.

The relation to the chief servants is illustrated by the illness and death of Hurree after fifteen years of service. Annette described Hurree's last illness to the children in Southport—how he would not eat what the other servants brought him but when Annette went to him opened his mouth like a good man; how she put into this mouth soup and port wine and other things forbidden to Hindus.

You know that Hindus do not eat beef nor drink wine but when poor Hurree seemed likely to die we said he must take beef soup and drink wine and that we would give his brahmin priest money to forgive him. He does not know what he is getting but of course the other servants know and by-and-by when he is better, they will not eat with him, because he will have lost caste by eating our English food. It is better for him to eat it than die, is it not? I think he is ready to take anything I will give him. Poor fellow! he looks at me with such pitiful eyes when I go to see him.

But not even Annette could save Hurree. A week later she was writing to Letty.

Ballygunge, 18/1/86.

My Dear Letty,

I have several things to tell you and one is not gay but still I should tell you.

I wonder if you remember Hurree, the head bearer who was so very kind to all of you. He has been your father's servant for fifteen years and has been a good and faithful servant. When you were born, he was the first person after Papa who nursed you for your father took you out of my room and laid you in his arms. He taught you to say your letters in Hindi! He taught you to say "Papa" and "Mamma." He was very good indeed to Tutu when she was ill in Mussoorie with Mamma. Indeed he was good to you all and we are very much obliged to him for all his kindness. He was very ill in the beginning of December when he was left behind in Faridpur to look after our things. Then in the middle of the month we sent Ramyad to fetch him here. They passed each other on the way and poor Hurree came to this house. He lay in a very cold room at first, in the servants' quarters then we had him taken up to a nice warm room in the house. We had the doctor to him very often and did all we could but it was

### *Servants, Snakes and Sickness*

of no use! On Monday morning soon after I had been to see him your father came and said "I am afraid poor Hurree is dying." I hurried off to him and gave him brandy and soup but it was all of no use. He held my hand and closed his eyes and was gone without any pain. I told Ramyad to say to him that we would take care of his children and his wife but I do not know whether he understood at all. It was not at all dreadful to see him die and no one would have been afraid. He was just tired of living and of being so weak and so he went to sleep. His widow snatched off the little coloured star which she wore on her forehead and cried dreadfully; then she broke all the glass bracelets which she had on her arms. Hurree has six daughters; three are married and three have to be. Hindus think that every woman must be married so I, with Papa's help and consent, shall help them. The girls are engaged (as we say) to be married. They will perhaps be married this year, if the priest says it will be right. We shall give each of them fifty rupees and then the little one will have fifty when she is married. Besides this your father will allow them something to live on till all are married and even then perhaps he will give the widow and Hurree's old sister some money each month. You see, when servants are faithful it is right to help them in every way.

*I think you would like to hear all about the Beveridges' party. It was something quite new up here and it brought together not only Europeans and natives but Hindus and Mahomedans, Beharis and Bengalis.*

Mrs. Grierson from Bankipur to her brother in England,  
September 16, 1881.

*Mrs. Joll says she is coming to me to get hints on the art of chaperonage.*

Henry from Bankipur to Annette in Mussoorie,  
October 3, 1882.

*It is 9 a.m. and the children are just coming in from under the big tree. It is cool or at least so cloudy now that they can sit till late. . . .*

Henry from Bankipur to Annette in Mussoorie,  
September 2, 1882.

*Am I a good judge, I wonder? I think I do good here, but what is the real fact?*

Henry from Bankipur to Annette in Mussoorie,  
September 9, 1882.

*The comet is very beautiful just now. It is standing over the trees at our eastern gate like the flaming sword of the Angel who guarded Paradise when man was driven out of it. I have not a Milton here but I daresay he might furnish a quotation in this place.*

Henry from Bankipur to Annette in Mussoorie,  
October 4, 1882.

## Chapter XI

### THE FAMILY HAS A HOME

**H**ENRY'S appointment to Patna gave Annette for the first time, and as it proved for the last time, a home in India where all the family could be together. Patna was in Bengal but not in Lower Bengal; it lay half-way up the course of the Ganges; by comparison with many other stations Bankipur, where the Patna judge had his residence, was almost a health resort. For nearly two-and-a-half years Annette, first with two children and later with a third child, was continuously with Henry in Bankipur; the whole family were together again in a trip to Australia; after a separation, when the illness of her youngest drove Annette to the hills at Mussoorie, they were together again at Bankipur till, in the spring of 1883, Henry took his second furlough.

Bankipur was the nearest thing to a settled home together that Henry and Annette ever had in India. They made lasting friends there. They both went back there whenever occasion offered, in journeying across India. They found there always their fill of Station Society.

Rangpur had been a small station—Henry called it a “hole”—with very limited society. When the whole station of Rangpur came to dinner with Henry and Annette there were not more than a dozen at table: Patna was a larger and altogether more lively affair. Annette's diary recorded repeatedly “dinner party” or “large dinner party” at home, alternately with dining out. When she gave a dance three months after arrival, sixty people came and nearly half of them returned on the following evening to finish the feast. Thrice during Henry's office the station was favoured by a visit from the Lieutenant-Governor. On the first occasion, shortly before the birth of Tutu, Annette was in retirement. On the second occasion a great dinner to 100 people was given by a distinguished Indian, but the management of it fell on Henry and Annette. On the third occasion they themselves gave an “International Party” to 160 people.

These two, of course, in no way confined their social inter-

## *India Called Them*

course to Europeans. They were continually visiting or being visited by Indian friends. They introduced to Bankipur the idea of an International Party. One such event was described in a letter by one of the visitors—Mrs. George Grierson, whose husband became in due course Sir George Grierson, O.M., and the distinguished Editor of the *Linguistic Survey*.

Bankipur, 16/9/81.

My dearest Maurice,

I think you would like to hear all about the Beveridges' party. It was something quite new up here, tho' they often have them in Bengal. And it brought together not only Europeans and natives, but also Hindus and Mahomedans, Beharis and Bengalis. At first it seemed as if there would be great difficulty about the food part of the performance, for Mahs. must eat by themselves and each Hindu caste must also eat alone. The difficulty was solved by having tents put up in the compound for each. Native gentlemen helped in this, lending tents, and having them put up. All thro' natives were eager to help the servants of the house, sparing no trouble. Mrs. B. sent out invitations (printed) for an "International Evening Party" and she says all the answers were most polite and proper, only expressing more of the "honour felt" &c. One who came to call asked what time he was to come and on hearing half past nine, "Oh, said he, there will be so many then. I shall come at nine." And this happy idea struck so many, that they began to arrive at half past eight, and when we got there at about 20 minutes to ten, not only were they all there, but the amusements were rapidly becoming exhausted. It is, as I have told you, a very nice house, and all the rooms were well lighted and thrown open, a fact which impressed the guests very much, their ways are so different. The verandahs were lighted up with Chinese lanterns, and one was devoted to George's curiosities, his type-writer, telephone and electric pen. Unfortunately the Europeans chiefly engrossed the telephone; however, it I daresay was slightly too scientific for the Indians. The type-writer delighted them much more and they eagerly pressed down the letters one after another and eagerly looked at the word they had printed. Two rooms were devoted to pictures (hung on to red curtains stretched along the walls) and ancient Persian manuscripts and other things which might interest, and in another verandah were some native musicians. Finally the military band played at intervals, so you see there was no lack of amusements. The first thing that struck us on arriving was the heavy smell of sandalwood and rose-water filling the house. Of course, being got up

### *The Family Has a Home*

in their equivalent to Sunday go to meetings they were all well rubbed over with the former. The heat was tremendous, in spite of punkahs, and we made our way to the centre of attraction, the Tetara players who were sitting on the ground in a verandah, surrounded with a crowd. Two men played long instruments with strings, and on a little drum. The chief performer really played very well, and went over and over "We won't go home till morning" at least the first two lines of it with native shanty additions, his head wagging about all the time as if it would tumble off at the least touch, till one longed to beg him to change it a little. Natives could listen forever apparently, but our more volatile dispositions prompted us to move about, so with another lady, and escorted by the tiny Mahomedan barrister who had been "home" and was dressed with great propriety in neat swallowtails, we took a peep into the Mahomedan supper tent, where long tables were spread with sweet-meats and fruits and chairs were placed. Then we paid a visit to hard-working G. showing off his curiosities with other people's help, and then I went and sat in the "sumptuous" (as the native papers say) drawing-room, and watched the crowd of dark men, all in shiny boots, and narrow white trousers, white and dark coats and puggarees or gay caps. Suddenly Mrs. B. came up to me and putting her arm round my neck, gave me a kiss, saying she had not seen me before. This no doubt they all thought exactly right, since she did it. After this George and I played, and they all stared fixedly at his twiddling and flourishing as we tortured the Blue Bells of Scotland in all kinds of ways. I am sure they did not like the sound, though they were far too polite to say so. Some Mahomedans sang too, after many nervous attempts to begin. We can't find any harmony in their music either, though a little of it is interesting as a curiosity. Then came supper, each party in its own place. Only several of our gentlemen ate with the Mahs. and two of them with us. A ham had been provided for the bandmen's supper, but it was kept far away from the house lest "the accursed flesh" should be seen by the Faithful. A very high up old gentleman came up after supper and squirted rose-water into our faces. This was a great piece of courtesy, so we bore it as well as we could. One boy amused me very much. In all the heat, he had a thick English woollen comforter round his neck, the ends gracefully hanging down in front. He evidently thought himself got up à l'Anglais but he must have been dreadfully uncomfortable. We all departed at 12, and everyone seemed greatly pleased. Some of the notices written by natives in the English local papers are very amusing. I must give you an extract or two. There is a description of Mr. Paul. "Mr. Paul made himself very sociable by his good natured simple



### *India Called Them*

and pleasant talk on Sunday (!) subjects." *Sunday* is supposed to mean *sundry*. You can imagine Mr. Paul's delight at this portrait of himself.

As to us "Mr. & Mrs. Grierson entertained the company with some choice times (presumably tunes) on the Piano." And here is one of the many encomiums on Mrs. B. "To the whole assembly of guests the ineffable grace of her manners, and the kind attention which Mrs. Beveridge shewed to all, was highly gratifying." Then "the noble and beauteous guests were set down" &c. Altogether I think it has been very successful and I hope there will be a great many more given.

At Rangpur there had been one eligible and well-seasoned bachelor with no one to catch him. At Bankipur there were a number of young ladies, staying with parents or friends, and there were swains for them to compete for. Henry and Annette, at the full tide of their social activity, planned to add to the number of young ladies. They suggested to Annette's step-mother that her daughter, Kate Akroyd, then about 24 years of age, should come out to them in India, but nothing came of this invitation. They suggested then to Mrs. Goldie that her second daughter Annie, Jeanie's sister, should come out, and this was accepted. Annie—also about 24 years old—arrived for the cold weather of 1881-82; she joined Henry and Annette in their expedition to Australia in the following May and June, and she duly found a husband. But, apart from this, Annie's visit was not regarded by Henry and Annette as a success and led to a good deal of heart-burning. Annette's view was that she had no objection to Annie's marriage, but did object to her method of bringing it about. Happily the episode did not lead to any breach in the friendship with Mrs. Goldie.

The voyage to Australia in May and June 1882 enabled Henry to meet a cousin—Adam Adamson, son of his father's elder sister Elizabeth; one of this cousin's letters described the sensation caused on arrival by the retinue of Indian servants which accompanied Henry and Annette even to Australia. This family voyage was made largely in search of health and strength for Annette and the children. But when Annette's diary resumes at the end of July it records the youngest child Tutu as "very ill," while Annette herself had fever. So on August 4th: "I decided to obey the doctor and take Tutu to Mussoorie." She set forth a few days later.

### *The Family Has a Home*

Henry was left in charge of the house and the rest of the servants and the two elder children, Letty turned five, Bhaia not yet three-and-a-half. To help him there appears the first of many Fräuleins. Annette was clear that German was a language that her children should learn as soon as they learned anything, and their conversation became an easy blend of English, German and Hindustani. How this first Fräulein swung into Annette's orbit is unknown. But the enquiring Henry elicited her age—as 21—and many surprising facts about her. If Fräulein Gause's accounts of herself were even tolerably correct, she was no ordinary governess. She set out with the family for Europe in April 1883 but there she leaves the story. Emma Vogel—the real Fräulein of the children's abiding love—came later.

Henry, of course, was not left to himself and Fräulein Gause and the children in Bankipur. The station was a society in which everyone knew everyone and all were continually in and out of one another's houses, in which anything that happened to anyone was the subject of concern to the rest. "Everybody," reported Henry to Annette, "is distressed to see pretty Mrs. Joll growing so stout and coarse looking." Of course, kind friends supplied the malicious explanation: "The Cummins say she takes two bottles of beer a day and no exercise. If she goes on, she and her husband will be like the Long Dragoon and his wife one of whom was like a mile and the other like a milestone."

Henry—with perennial interest in his fellow men and women—gladly constituted himself Annette's purveyor of gossip.

Collinson and Miss Metcalfe are much together and are known by the name of the two halves. In their case two halves do not make one whole.

I praised up Miss Halliday to Grindley and he said she was "Chalks" whereby I understand the young man was expressing fervent admiration.

Mrs. Halliday hints at Mr. Jenings of the Police (the Railway Inspector) having had a disappointment, but will not give me particulars which is hard on your Special Correspondent.

He reported how one romance reached its appointed end of a wedding, and that the mother of the bride was planning at once to bring another daughter out from England. He saw another romance get on to the wrong but not unusual track, of a swain

### *India Called Them*

whose betrothed was on the way out to join her family in the station and marry him, going over bag and baggage before her arrival to another young lady and her family. He reported how the mother of the second young lady gave the swain till the 25th, her daughter's birthday, to declare himself or be forbidden the house, how he did declare himself by marching one Sunday to service with the second young lady and seating himself with her in the choir, how thereupon the parents of the first young lady broke off their devotions and marched out of church.

Henry added to his opportunities of gossip by proposing, subject to Annette's approval, to have two stray young ladies to stay with him. Annette made no objection. "Do have the Miss Cummins to stay if you like dear!" she wrote from Mussoorie. "It would be original, but with Fräulein and two young ladies numbers would perhaps make up for quality of chaperon—quality being represented by the wedding ring." Henry soon found himself chaperoning another romance.

Bankipur, 27/9/82.

The Miss Cummins stay here for the wedding and then go to the Griersons. They are blithe girls and sing sweetly but they are rather hard and bitter. A step-mother seems to have spoiled their lives in some way. . . . Robson pays much attention to Miss E. Cummin but it will come to nothing. I am afraid she fell in his estimation by not knowing who the Lily Maid of Astolat was. . . .

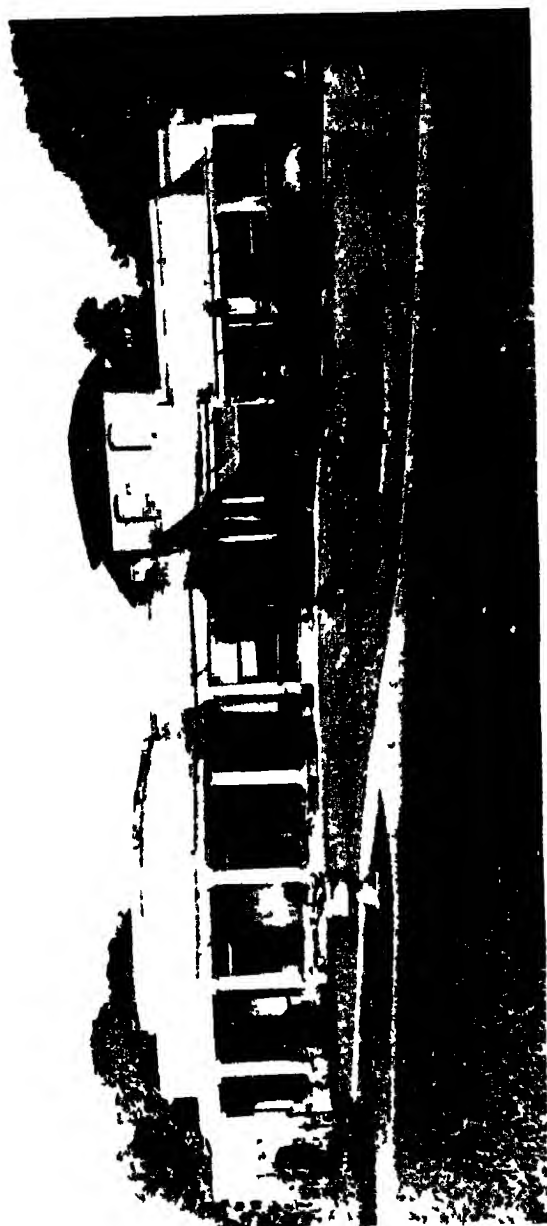
29/9/82.

I was working today from 5 a.m. and so about three I got dead tired in Cuttcherry. I came home about 4 and rested for a couple of hours—walking about in the garden &c., and now sit down to write to you.

Mr. Robson is paying a great deal of attention to Miss Ellen Cummin. I hope that if he does not mean anything the girl will not get too fond of him. I am not sure if it would be a happy union. He is a petit maître and she is too free with her tongue. I am not sure if she has a heart, but I won't believe that an Irish girl is without one.

1/10/82.

. . . Miss Ellen Cummin announced to me this morning her engagement to Mr. Robson. Will they be happy? She is an attractive girl and he has attractions too, but perhaps they are both a little selfish and exacting.



*Judge's House at Bankipur*



## *The Family Has a Home*

3/10/82.

Mrs. Joll says she is coming to me to get hints in the art of chaperonage.

4/10/82.

Our pair of lovers are still full of one another. Mrs. Dyson thinks that Robson is throwing himself away and Mrs. Joll thinks that Ellen is far too good for him. Miss Ellen is certainly clever and plays and paints and speaks French well. But she has dreadfully little book education and I fear is not ashamed of the deficiency. Bookish Mr. Robson is trying to educate her but he will find that "no go."

However Henry might try to find good in his young lady guests, the Fräulein already in his house made no such effort. She did not like the Cummin girls at all. They were *zu frei* in their ways and too disregarding of the children.

As Henry suspected, Fräulein had a temper of her own. She had also a large range of languages, claiming Greek, Arabic, French, Italian, etc., and a curious history, real or imagined.

9/10/82.

She says you are so good a mother and that mothers in India are generally so gleichgültig—a fact which I energetically denied. I must read her remarks on Egypt some day.

4/10/82.

I had a long talk with Fräulein last night. Her ambition is to rival or surpass Ida Pfeiffer and to travel everywhere—even among the cannibals of Sumatra. Then she would like to study at the University and highest goal of all to be a member of the Berlin Geographical Society. She writes her travels and is now sending them home to a German illustrated newspaper whose editor she knows. She says that her great wish is to show that German women can be emancipated and can travel as well as men. German girls are much behind she says, and the men always tell them that the only thing they have to do is to get married. I am not sure if her travels will reassure people. She came out in the Thames from Suez and was at Ceylon when we were there. She arrived on 27th April I think. . . . She went and saw the tanks at Aden alone, she drove to Walhwelia alone, and she walked to Buona Vista alone. There she had a horrible adventure. She turned off the road to the Mission and was gathering flowers in the jungle when two natives attacked her. One seized her by the back of the

### *India Called Them*

neck and the other by her hands. They tried to strip off her clothes, their object apparently being to ravish her. She struggled, she beat them with her umbrella, she scratched them. Dreieiniger Gott, she cries in her journal, I had the strength of three men. At last they let her go and she bounded over the rocks. On she rushed over that dreadfully stony peninsula, her one thought being how to escape and she fancying every moment her neck was being seized from behind. She came to a cliff but went down it somehow and came to a fisherman's hut. The fisherman wonderingly asked how she came there and would not believe that she had come over the rocks. However they gave her water (it was then 2 p.m. on an April day!) and then after a while she went on up to the white wall and the old cannon that we saw. Luckily for her a boat from the Thames was taking in sand at Watering Point and it took her on board. You know I suppose that she climbed the Pyramids. Her mother died when she was born and her father when she was 9. She has no home duties or home. I doubt if she is tameable. Under her placid German exterior lurks a Bedouin spirit.

It is not, perhaps, surprising that the last record of this Fräulein, some years later, is in Bangkok, and as having, under the advice of her consul, passed herself off as married. But Henry and Annette thought her an excellent governess and agreed with one another to raise her salary.

Henry's gossip was not confined to romances, and with his tender heart went a critical judgment.

4/10/82.

I dined at Mrs. B's on Monday. Mrs. M. is foolishly fond of dogs and not as pretty as I at first thought her. She sings French songs prettily. Mrs. B. has no weaknesses but I fear no softnesses either. She says that she is going home on account of her boy. She says that he is learning bad words from the natives and so she must remove them from him. Poor child, he is only 2½. The truth is that she troubles herself very little about him and is hardly ever to be seen with him. One cannot make elaborate toilettes and play lawn tennis every evening and also look after baby. She is one of the gleichgültig Anglo-Indian mothers that Fräulein speaks of.

29/8/82.

Fräulein was treated with great consideration by Tweedie and dined with us when the D's came. Mr. & Mrs. D's relations to one another remind me of Jeannie . . . I should think her adoration of

### *The Family Has a Home*

her husband would be likely to do him harm. However I perhaps look too persistently at the other side of the stuff.

I went and saw poor Hard. He is a kind of leper and the doctors say five or six years of a cold climate might restore him to health and I should think any sacrifice would be worth making for this. It is dreadful to think that a young active hard-working officer should have to endure such slights and misery as he must have. Fortunately a sister is coming to live with him. He said he would like a transfer to Bankipur but I dared not encourage the idea.

While Henry practised the arts of chaperonage at Bankipur, Annette at Mussoorie had a much quieter time than three years before at Shillong. There were, no doubt, tea-parties and badminton and fancy dress balls, but she made no mention of such gaieties in her chronicle to Henry. She hired a dandy, and the four dandy-wallahs became so many slaves (idle ones) added to Tutu's and Sirdar's retinue. She discovered an excellent chemist's shop, but one needed to be made of gold to deal with it: "However you and I would coin ourselves for Tutu, so I buy whatever is needful." She had friends and went expeditions: on one of these, as had been recorded, she fell among leeches; on another, passing a cemetery and recalling Henry's fondness for such places, she turned in, and the rows of baby tombs sent a terror to her heart. She took up writing and produced an article about Rural Life in Behar which Henry pronounced excellent, though he thought that she had made a mistake in her botany about borage; she did not think so.

One reason for Annette's quieter life at Mussoorie than at Shillong was that she was three years further on the road to deafness; society without Henry had become less easy. But the main reason lay in her pursuit of health. She had gone to Mussoorie in order to bring her youngest child round from dangerous weakness. She had gone to build up her own strength. In these main purposes she succeeded. The letters at the end of her time in the hills are full of her references to Tutu's roses and Henry's anxious enquiries after her own.

Bankipur, 29/9/82.

I am glad that you seem better. You must have a colour in your cheeks though or I will send you back again. I am glad that you are stouter. Were you to become Mrs. Masters and Mrs. Havelock



### *India Called Them*

rolled into one I would not divorce you. Rather I would say as Mr. Bright is reported to say regarding the growing embonpoint of Miss N. that you are more delicious than ever. . . .

We discussed the existence of God at dinner, and after dinner, as Dyson, Collinson and I walked home in the moonlight, we discussed the nature of love. Dyson was all for unselfish love and said Sydney Carton in the Tale of Two Cities was his hero. Collinson confessed to having wept over the Mill on the Floss.

Annette liked station gossip and to know the results of Henry's researches into Fräulein's past. But she was even more interested in her elder children. She pined for them and suggested having them up to Mussoorie.

Mussoorie, 20/9/82.

A week ago I felt well and walked long distances—now I cannot persuade myself to walk and I dislike the sight of food. I believe it will be right for me to stay here during October and as long as you can spare into November. This would make it still seven weeks that I cannot see my darlings. Sometimes I am tempted to ask for them. The journey is very easy and I would move into a Bandour house with them. Am I very weak? Dear! six weeks is a long time added to six weeks already gone. You would be left alone only a short time. . . .

Forgive me, dear, if you are vexed with me. I do not see any principle of fighting with my wish to see them. I do not think I am doing wrong, though perhaps I am weak.

. . . *I think you'll send me a telegram.* If you say the bairns are not to leave home I will not repine at your decision. . . .

Henry did not grant Annette's plea to see the elder children in Mussoorie, but he kept her in news of them. He told her how five-year-old Letty, on a journey passing a large green island on a river, had demanded to have it as a present; how three-year-old Bhaia had expressed his dislike of kisses, but had made exceptions in favour of his father's and his mother's. He reported many other items about the two:

Bhaia knows a whole roomful of English words he says, but only a little Deutsch. He can write but badly, he says. He hopes his mother will come soon.

Do not fret about Letty and Bhaia. They are exceedingly well; everybody says that Letty's manners are so much improved. She does

### *The Family Has a Home*

not squeal or bite and when people speak to her she answers them. She is really often very sweet. Bhaia is jolly but somewhat stolid. . . .

It is 9 a.m. and the children are just coming in from under the big tree. It is cool or at least so cloudy now that they can sit till late. . . .

Letty says I want to go to Mussoorie, I want to go to England. Take the naughty sun away, send it to another country, I don't like it.

Bhaia is busy just now under the table tying up Quiz. He tried Pussy but she scratched him and so Bhaia has turned his attention to the dog.

The contrast between the vivid, quick and tempestuous elder daughter and somewhat stolid Bhaia, going his own way, cutting papers, hopping about, and digging in the garden, is a recurrent theme in Henry's reports on the children.

Letty has become a quite well-behaved child. . . . Bhaia is Launce's dog Crab for unimpressionability, and is naughty only at breakfast, when too he at once is brought to order by Ramyad's being called in to remove him.

Letty may hold her own in an age of negations but what will the poor gentle Bhaia do? He will float down the stream and perhaps go over the cataracts unless some kind fairy pluck him aside. I have great faith in that. Hylas will always find a nymph.

In saying these things to Annette about his son, Henry, no doubt, was presciently building barriers against her danger of son worship. In practical tenderness to every one of his children equally he never failed for a moment.

Bhaia will not be the comet of a season but he will be a pleasant thought and perhaps a shelter in a weary land. He is so happy that one need have no compunction for having brought him into the world. . . .

Henry and Annette were interested in books and in people, in their work and in their children. But their strongest interest then and always was in one another. "I do so long for the time," wrote Henry to Mussoorie, "when I shall once again hold you in my arms and tell you how much I love you. As Lady Rachel Russell says in the most touching part of her letters, I want him (her) to talk with, to walk with, to eat and sleep with." "Love," wrote Annette to Bankipur, "is a marvellous fact and no one has explained what it is."

## *India Called Them*

Like sunshine and sleep and others of the great pleasures it is happily very common. There must be some strong attraction i.e. not only an imaginative one to make us yearn across such great spaces of the earth to those we love. I am constantly in spirit with you and I see you as I so often have, in your office, and at table and in your early morning's last sleep—and I feel that it is inexplicable that you are so far. Dear! I see you write your letters to me! I know sometimes in them when you have laid your pen down to think a moment of me or of something your words have brought to mind. You don't know how I know you, how I love you—nor how I crave to make you talk to me—to turn out of your thoughts opinions on many subjects and to know you still better than I do. There are great unexplored regions in your thoughts that I want to traverse. When we go on furlough there will be time and repose and we can talk.

Though, in order to marry Henry before the Registrar, Annette had submitted to declaring herself not a Christian, she never ceased to hanker after some form of religious belief for herself and some training in worship for her children. Henry stuck to the Stoics and agnosticism for himself. But he agreed that the teaching of the children was Annette's sphere. "In the holidays I will talk to you about religion if I can. I have no wish to prevent you from teaching Letty what you think proper." Annette was always wishing to make Henry feel as she did.

Mussoorie, 22-24/9/82.

I admire the Stoics too but I think there is more outside them than in their philosophy. I do believe in a great unknown which through us makes for righteousness—and back to which returns at death the force or soul which is in us and which does not disclose itself to scientific analysis. I do not care what it is called—I can call it God and I could, if you let me, teach our children to pray—to lay open their hearts for moral strength—to such a God. We must think dearest of what you would like me to do! I cannot imagine that reverence and aspiration for goodness can be so well taught to a young child without some Theistic teaching. I think we are too ready, fearing to be untrue, to shut our eyes to the spiritual facts of our nature, our aspirations and religious feelings, but they are there as real as the material facts.

Goodbye my darling—don't put all I have said away from you as old beliefs stretched to new facts. I don't think it is, but my words are few and poor.

. . . I have dreamed about you this morning—I saw you come

## *The Family Has a Home*

into the drawingroom and give me your little salaam of return when other people are present—and I heard your laugh and I saw you get up off the sofa to meet me. I have dozed away half a day!

You will tell me if you think I may leave this before the 13th. I shall not go to Delhi and get Tutu's roses rubbed off. . . .

The greatest luxury for each of these two people was to roll out his or her mind to the other. Saturday, with Sunday to follow, was for Henry a common occasion for this.

Bankipur, Saturday evening.

I have just been examining your photograph. It does not do you justice. Your eyes do not come out and you look sad and weary. I must have you done again, say with Tutu in your arms.

If I had not married you, do you think you would have had a more brilliant career? You would have written more and read more and you might have married a man *teres totus et rotundus*. If I have checked your development I trust that you will forgive me in consideration of the three children. I know perhaps that the noblest ideal for me might have been not to marry at all, but my Darling I had not strength for that and if you had not married me I should have gone all adrift. Celibacy is for angels, says Robertson in one of his sermons. It is not a state that would have been profitable to me and I am conscious of a thousand sympathies that I had not as a bachelor. Mr. Gilman would have been a happier and a better man if he had married again and to come nearer home perhaps Mr. Peacock would have been better to have married than to have spent his time flirting with Mrs. Inglis.

If we leave India for good I want to take you to Barisal to see Jeannie's tomb. Sometimes I almost forget at times that that tomb contains a child as well as a wife. The little thing was buried in the garden at first but when the mother died it was taken up and laid in the same coffin. Page tells me that the grave is in good order and that Mr. Brown looks after it.

The roses in the garden are coming out. . . . Am I a good judge, I often wonder? I think I do good here, but what is the real fact?

Annette's answer written three days later covered innumerable pages.

12th Sep. 1882.

My dearest Henry,

I rose very late today for Tutu woke me so thoroughly in the night that I lay thinking for some hours and slept till nearly eight. My first sight was of Bogmonia with a large bundle of letters in her

## *India Called Them*

hand—very welcome as none came yesterday and all the more welcome from their contents.

I do not think you would have attained a higher ideal if you had not married again. You have too great a capacity for loving to have lived alone, and however cherished and tenderly kept in memory I cannot believe that a love of such short enjoyment as yours and Jeannie's could have filled your life. If you feel as I do, it is the last year which makes the closest bonds between husband and wife. Why should you so separate Jeannie and me? We are inseparably bound by you and at least, if different in other qualities, we both loved you.

It always grieves and a little hurts me to hear celibacy praised at the expense of married life. I could easily, being a woman, have lived unmarried; I have lived long enough and passed by sufficient opportunities of marriage to assert this but I do not feel that I am a worse woman for being a wife.

I came across a passage from Lecky's morals last night which, *mutatis mutandis*, gives the spirit of what I feel about the redeeming of the passion which celibates reprobate. It says that the *Bona Dea* is the ideal *wife* "who never looked in the face or had known the name of any man but her husband." It seems to me—an old married woman you know dear—that too much is made of the sinfulness of this passion. I am very ignorant no doubt but it just seems to me that it is a natural craving like hunger or thirst and like hunger should be neither stimulated by "zests" nor unduly indulged. If one thinks of it as a simple animal need it seems to become a very common-place matter. It is when by repression or license it poisons the imagination that it is a sin and a curse. I do not think women can judge sufficiently well in this matter to condemn men for yielding to this passion more easily than they do—because I believe that they have not physically the same temptations and this perhaps accounts for my being unable to conceive any pleasure derivable from it except in the strict limitation of a marriage for love. So dearest husband I do not like to hear you regret that you could not live alone. Surely nothing is more dear or even sacred to us than our marriage.

All this does not prevent me from reverencing the man who from good reasons leads a celibate life—but I do not include the living celibate amongst those good reasons. I am a little disturbed at writing all this to you. Perhaps I should not! Tell me if I am wrong.

You ask if I should not have made a more brilliant career if I had not married you? I might have made my name known in a larger or smaller circle as health and industry would have allowed and if I could have recovered from the semi-suicide which I in ignorance and

## *The Family Has a Home*

enthusiasm was committing in Calcutta. But what would that have steaded the world or me? I have never desired to live alone. It takes me back to the days of my most unselfish enthusiasm to write like this—days in which like Dorothea I longed to widen the skirts of light and in which I floated as it were in a tide of sympathy with those for whom I worked. Those were days when, teaching commonplace grammar to thirty girls, I felt that they and I were an entity—to rise together—when each dryest rule became to me instinct with life because by the true and clear teaching of it I hoped to work a moral good. Then came my ignorant venture to India and the mad notion that I could work with and for Indian women as I had for English girls, and by looking back I now know that I was wrong to leave my place in London, for I believe that I could have done better work there than I did here and should probably have avoided the I think too heavy strain of my deafness and ill health. I know that when I had my ears I had a power over people whom I desired to influence for good.

But all that is far away! and unregretted! For if then I might have drawn a few souls with me nearer to the light and have cheered a few hard workers with fellowship and sympathy, now I am firmly welded into the great chain of life, I have done my part in lengthening that chain. I no longer am in the foreground of the battle, for my children are there—still in our shadow and dependent upon our efforts to help them to grow so as to form their link in the great chain. I am content—absolutely content to live in them if we can so rear them that they shall arise to higher things upon me as a stepping-stone. I don't think of you as only a stepping-stone.

For you and me my dear husband, what can I say? I have no higher desire than to be loved by you, to make you happy and to see you honourable and honoured. I will not say more *to you* than that every year binds me more closely and inextricably to you.

Do not however suppose that I regard our family life as being what it ought to be. I am sure it is capable of great improvement. In the first place I am convinced that if as I suppose we return to India, we must concede so much to lessened strength as to secure more repose and annual change of air. We must lay ourselves out to live and not only to be alive; we must try to be so free from physical weakness that our judgement and temper shall be calmer. (I am not giving covert stabs—only speaking of us both as one.)

I am quite sure also that we ought to use our Sundays better—we ought to secure some repose of feeling and some means of re-creating our good intentions and aims—which are apt to get worn off by daily

## *India Called Them*

life. I do not wish to fashion anything like a new creed but I think that we should devote a part of our Sunday to reading *together* something which we feel lifts us out of our daily cares and which being read and commented on together united us in our aim at good living.

I know you have your levée and I grudge the strength it takes out of you and from our family day. This has long been my thought and my wish is that we devote part of Sunday to ourselves—to you and me. We live too much from hand to mouth—a consequence chiefly of diminished energy and I cannot when you ask me about leaving India and question whether you are a good Judge and so on, resist the conclusion that you would be a better Judge and I a better Judge's wife if we created together a fund of more earnest thought and more refreshing feeling out of the great world of thought which lives in good books. It is not information I want to get; it is discipline and strength to serve as our arm against vexation and cares.

I have endless talk for you! Are you tired? I will not write to-morrow and then too you will perhaps read my letter twice. I do above all things desire that when we go on furlough you let your mind lie fallow, open to the airs of Heaven and do not cramp it up in any Indian waterway. It is too fresh and full of sap (if not screwed into a dry compendium) for the perpetual dustiness you subject it to. There!

“And day by day the Severn fills  
The salt sea water passes by  
And hushes half the babbling Wye  
And makes a silence in the hills.”

That is not verbatim correct but it is near enough—the babbling Wye in you is too dear to me for me to see it swamped by routine and narrow thoughts, and the thoughts from the mountain too valuable to be unuttered because they are silenced by the daily salt tide of Indian duties and interest. Stand back for a few months and let your mother country take her place and cut down the jungle of all these hardworking years which must impede your true view even of India.

I have written you a volume—but it is as nothing to what I could have written. Please read it twice and be as you are always inclined to be tender and comprehending. You do not do my boy justice. He makes no noise but he has no lack of strength of mind. I am looking for news of your decision to come.

Kiss the darlings and tell Letty that Tutu came in today and asked “Letty accha hai?”

Your loving wife,  
A. S. Beveridge.

## *The Family Has a Home*

This interchange is typical—Henry starting one hare after another, Annette dutifully chasing each of them to its doom, taking Henry's happy and unhappy thoughts alike more gravely than he did himself, ending up with what was undoubtedly sound advice—to stand back a little from the Indian treadmill. Rudyard Kipling was saying much the same thing at the same time.

Now India is a place beyond all other where one must not take things too seriously—the midday sun always excepted. Too much work and too much energy kill a man just as effectively as too much assorted vice or too much drink. Flirtation does not matter, because everyone is being transferred, and either you or she leave the station and never return. Good work does not matter, because a man is judged by his worst output, and another man takes all the credit of the work as a rule. Bad work does not matter, because other men do worse, and incompetents hang on longer in India than anywhere else. Amusements do not matter, because you must repeat them as soon as you have accomplished them once, and most amusements only mean trying to win another person's money. Sickness does not matter, because it is all in the day's work, and if you die, another man takes over your place and your office in the eight hours between death and burial. Nothing matters except home-furlough and acting allowances, and these only because they are scarce. It is a slack country, where all men work with imperfect instruments; and the wisest thing is to escape as soon as ever you can to some place where amusement is amusement and a reputation worth the having.<sup>1</sup>

This was the year of a great comet. Looking at it and rousing others to look allowed Henry to enjoy to the full his passion for unusual hours:

Wednesday 4 a.m., 4/10/82.

The Comet is very beautiful just now. It is standing over the trees at our eastern gate like the flaming sword of the Angel who guarded Paradise when man was driven out of it. I have not a Milton here but I daresay he might furnish a quotation in this place.

The tail of the Comet is forked and like a swallow's tail. Shall we say it is a burning feather floated into space from the body of the phoenix? There is no moon and this makes the Comet and all the

<sup>1</sup> From "Thrown Away" in *Plain Tales from the Hills*, published originally in the *Civil and Military Gazette*.



## *India Called Them*

starry host so bright just now. I awoke Fräulein and Letty and Miss Ellen Cummin. The former stood on their vantage ground at the window upstairs. And Miss Ellen Cummin responded to my invitation to "Come into the Garden" and stood near the large grass plot with her back hair comet wise streaming behind her. I called from the garden to Letty and she answered: "It is wunderschön." "Has the Bhaia seen it?" "Yes," they answered. "What does he think of it?" "Bhaia philosophiert," answers Fräulein. . . .

Annette had to confess, in answer to this, that she had not seen the comet, but an eleventh-hour postponement of her return enabled her to put this right.

Mussoorie, 11/10/82.

This is my last letter. I am so glad a new girls' school is to be built and that you are having something to do with it.

Your telegram came this morning. You are never tired of showing how you think of me. I think you are glad I am coming. I shall look for the comet on my way. It is most reprehensible of me not to have seen it.

It is a great pleasure that you like my article but where have I said anything about borage? . . .

. . . I am horrified to see my money running away in torrents. I shall persuade you to look at my account and see what I have done with it. I have very little more than enough to come home with and have not paid my doctor. I suppose I shall be forgiven! for this and for everything else I have ever done which you did not like—I hope.

. . . My love, dearest husband, I almost tremble lest anything should happen to prevent us from meeting. I feel like a child looking at a butterfly on a flower just ready to grasp the lovely creature but breathless lest it should escape him even when it seems so near. The butterfly is my happiness in our re-union.

12/10/82.

Alas! the butterfly escapes me.

I am sure that you will approve of my delaying my journey, rather than of risking anything for Tutu. I told you some days ago that she was not well. [There follows a sickroom account of dysentery and treatment] . . . all signs of dysentery have disappeared. I do not however like to move her . . . so have decided to remain till Monday when daks will be more easy to get and she will have recovered, I hope.

. . . I saw the comet today and think it "tres gentil" and not in

## *The Family Has a Home*

the least like a portent or a fiery flag in the sky. It was 5-30 a.m. and the first touch of dawn was in the sky, and all was lovely.

13/10/82.

I hope to leave on Monday at about eight in the morning before the rocks become hot. The road is very hot in the afternoon as the inner side is like a radiating machine.

. . . Goodbye my darling. Some day I shall come.

14/10/82.

Tutu is quite well again and is full of going to Patna. . . . Tutu is anxious to help me to write and as I do not allow it she has gone away in dudgeon and has put herself in a corner. I think she does not regard it as a place of punishment but as a place to manifest indignation.

At last, on October 18th, Annette, her child and her retinue got home. She took up at once her social round—including preparations for the Lieutenant-Governor's visit early in November and the entertainment of various visiting Commissioners. She returned to witness the breaking of a political storm that was destined to darken her sky and Henry's. This was the controversy occasioned by the so-called Ilbert Bill introduced early in 1883. In the words of two recent historians of India, this Bill "which took its popular name from the legal member in charge of it, though not its author, was a modest measure designed to remove an administrative anomaly. We have seen that Indians were first employed as magistrates merely to relieve over-worked Englishmen of the less important cases. and at first there was neither need nor demand for giving them power to try Englishmen, whose cases were heard only by English magistrates specially empowered for the purpose. By about 1880, however, Indians who had entered the Civil Service were becoming senior enough to be appointed District Magistrates, and it was an obvious anomaly that under the existing law the chief authority in a district could not dispose of cases which might be within the competence of one of his subordinates. The Bill designed to remove this anomaly met with furious opposition from the unofficial English element in Bengal and Bihar, mainly the growers of tea and indigo, who, living in districts remote from the capital, objected to be placed in the power of an Indian magistrate; and their attitude had the support of many local

### *India Called Them*

officials, headed by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. Their hostility was based directly on racial grounds. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Henry supported the Bill and was thus in the opposite camp to his Lieutenant-Governor (Sir Rivers Thompson). Annette publicly opposed the Bill, but not on racial grounds. She wrote a letter to *The Englishman*.

3/3/83.

I am not afraid to assert that I speak the feeling of all Englishwomen in India when I say that we regard the proposal to subject us to the jurisdiction of native Judges as an insult.

It is not pride of race which dictates this feeling, which is the outcome of something far deeper—it is the pride of womanhood. This is a form of respect which we are not ready to abrogate in order to give such advantages to others as are offered by Mr. Ilbert's Bill to its beneficiaries.

In this discussion as in most "il y a question de femmes"—and in this discussion the ignorant and neglected women of India rise up from their enslavement in evidence against their masters. They testify to the justice of the resentment which Englishmen feel at Mr. Ilbert's proposal to subject civilised women to the jurisdiction of men who have done little or nothing to redeem the women of their own races, and whose social ideas are still on the outer verge of civilisation.

In this letter, Annette's feelings about the defeat of her first mission to Indian women came to the surface. Her writing of the letter and public opposition to Henry did not in the least disturb their relation. It was the essence of their contract that each partner had the absolute unfettered right and duty of expression in private and in public of any honestly held opinion. Annette's letter—and there were some things in it even stronger than what is printed above—was defended to critics in England by Henry who disagreed with it, as a fair and temperate expression of a view which Annette had full right to hold.

The Ilbert Bill controversy could not scratch the diamond of Henry and Annette's love. But it did embitter racial relations in India, and thus made hard and solitary for the future the position of men like Henry. As the historians already quoted observe, the hostility of those who opposed the Ilbert Bill on racial grounds

<sup>1</sup> W. H. Moreland and Atul Chandra Chatterjee: *A Short History of India*, p. 434 (Longmans Green, 1936).

### *The Family Has a Home*

"was expressed in terms which far exceeded the usual limits of political controversy; a section of the Indian Press naturally replied in kind; and the racial issue was fairly joined. A compromise was eventually arranged, but much mischief had been done, and throughout a large part of India a definite tendency towards estrangement had come into existence. . . . As the century drew to its end, racial estrangement became manifest in the sphere of social relations."

So Henry who had always felt the injustice of England's domination of India, so Annette whose first friends and hosts in Calcutta had been Mr. and Mrs. Monmohan Ghose, so Henry and Annette with their "International Parties" found themselves with the tide running against them.

*At times when I sit in the garden in the cool of the evening  
I feel as if I never could go home. India has burnt itself  
into me.*

Henry from Bankipur to Annette in Mussoorie,  
October 6, 1882.

*But the children must, I think, go home or to the hills.  
I will not bear to look on their pallid faces another hot  
season. Alas! how many poor Europeans must bear to do  
this and see their children pining.*

Henry from Bankipur to Annette in Mussoorie,  
October 11, 1882.

*How happy we were at Keavil.*

Henry from Calcutta to Annette in Darjeeling,  
May 6, 1888.

## Chapter XII

### SCOTTISH INTERLUDE

**A**S the year of the comet drew to a close, Henry neared the completion of twenty-five years of Indian service. He had accumulated a claim to nearly two years of furlough. He had earned his pension, and from furlough could retire altogether to start at 46 a new life in Britain. What should he do? Naturally this depended to some extent on prospects in Britain. Could he find useful work to do there? On the other side, what were the prospects in India?

It is clear from Henry's letters that some of his judgments had been criticized by the High Court, but this did not mean that he could not hope for promotion to that court in due course himself. He had held as District and Sessions Judge one of the favourite stations in India. Annette had succeeded socially in her attack on Patna.

Naturally there was much discussion between Henry in Bankipur and Annette in Mussoorie as to what should happen next.

Bankipur, 17/8/82.

Today is a holiday and I have spent it so far very peaceably in reading Comte and talking to Letty.

The Sessions are still going on but somehow they interest me less than they did. I feel as if for a time I had got into a placid backwater, and were out of the swim of things. The witchery of India and Indian life comes more vividly before one at such times. I see myself slowly sailing up the river to join my first station at Mymensing, I see the rice fields and indigo lands and factories of Jessore and Nuddia and then I come to the gloomy tidal creeks of the Sunderbans and the weary trackings along them which I have experienced. The beautiful trees that one has seen, the garish blossoms of Sylhet, the almond trees of Rangpur, the lotuses and the lilies rise up before one and one feels loth to say that one's Indian life is coming to a close. . . .

. . . Do you think Mussoorie would do for a permanent residence for us? They say October is one of the best months in it.

## *India Called Them*

Mussoorie, 20/8/82.

Your holiday produced me a nice long letter as I hoped. I don't know about Mussoorie as a permanent residence (I never can think of any place out of England as permanent) but I think this: the question of retirement must be settled by you. If you wish to return to India after furlough, then I would say—Buy a home here and bring out Fräulein and an English nurse so as to give the children proper influences and make this headquarters for them during the next (say) five years until they are ready for advanced education. I should think it unwise to give up the furlough. There must among so many schools be a good body of permanent residents here. The place is very charming, accessible (only three hours of ghaut) moderate in prices. Will you come up and see it? And we can look at houses and so collect facts for future digestion. The eighteen months furlough may put new heart and life into us both and even Sessions regain their charm.

Bankipur, 26/8/82.

I think of taking furlough in March and of writing a scathing and yet conservative and constructive book on the administration of Justice in Bengal. How would it do to spend part of the furlough in Mussoorie?

I am so glad that Tutu has got roses. And you, have you not got any? If you don't have them by October I will send you home but I do hope that I won't need to do that. I expect to win a blooming bride when I catch hold of you again. I won't send you away again in a hurry. In spite of my composure I am often desorienté all alone here. The servants are very good and so are the children but I miss my wife.

Mussoorie, 29/8/82.

. . . I cannot be sorry you should miss me. As for me I cannot let myself think too much about you because I feel too painful a tightening of my heart strings. However I am holding on—I have brought Tutu to complete health again and am much better myself. I believe that the isolation is very good for me. Yesterday I felt a strange kind of peace as though the world had gone a space away from me and left me free with reality—with all my loves and my aspirations unalloyed by the worries and annoyances of petty cares which seem to have choked me for some months.

As to *Furlough* I do not think a fifth child would add to our happiness and I cannot approve of your spending holiday on anything connected with India.

### *Scottish Interlude*

Besides I think you are too close to it to be able to see all round judicial administration and you lack High Court experience.

I also should not like to diminish the quantity of temperate air due to us by staying here where the foreign nature of the place is sufficiently attested by the leeches which sit in waiting even on my doorsteps.

I long oh! how I long to go and see the source of the Ganges. Does it present itself in the light of a pilgrimage due to the country? It does to me.

The fifth child deprecated by Annette was Henry's projected book on The Administration of Justice in Bengal. The four existing children were *The District of Bakarganj* (1876), Letty (1877), Willy (1879), and Tutu (1880). The projected work on the Administration of Justice in Bengal was reduced to two articles published in the *Calcutta Review*. Henry's next actual book was *The Trial of Nanda Kumar*, published in 1886.

Henry's anxious questionings as between furlough and retirement continued.

Bankipur, 9/9/82.

I am very busy as usual. Yes you will come down on or about 15th October. We will take furlough I think in March. Shall we retire? Certainly if pleasure only be looked to. But what would be best for India and for you and the children? I can stay out here and economise. Could I make myself known at home? Unless one can get a hearing knowledge and ability are of no use. I should not like to settle down into a Whistler or a mere paterfamilias.

Bankipur, 29/9/82.

We shall see about furlough when you come down. You and the children must go, and I do not see why I should stay. Appellate Benches may go hang for all I care. But I cannot give up India for good. I am transplanted rice and should like to be harvested in the swamps. . . .

Bankipur, 4/10/82.

The morning is breaking and the garden is glimmering in the dew.

Can I really leave all this and go home. Certainly not if Appellate Benches come. If I had a third subordinate Judge, work would be much lighter and I would not be oppressed.

But the children must I think go home or to the hills. I will not bear to look on their pallid faces another season. Alas how many poor Europeans must bear to do this and see their children pining.



## *India Called Them*

6/10/82.

The Miss Cummins have gone off to Arrah and I am all alone to-night. In eight days more I will have you by my side and then how happy we shall be. At times when I sit in the garden in the cool of the evening and look at the beautiful crotons and away out to the blithe Deana I feel as if I never could go home. India has burnt itself into me and I dread the cold and wet country of my birth. The work too when not too hard is so interesting that I feel as if I could not quit it. Perhaps with a refuge in the hills we need not go home.

There was never any real doubt as to what Henry would do. He would take Annette and the children home on furlough, meaning to return, and he would return soon rather than late. India was in his bones.

So in the first months of 1883, while the Ilbert Bill storm was rising, Annette, with her domestic army, carried through her second major task of packing up, storing, selling; there were several more such tasks to come in her time in India. She and Henry paid a round of farewell visits. She fired her broadside at the Ilbert Bill in the *Englishman*.

At last, with the three children—Letty rising 6, Willy 4 plus, Tutu nearing 3—they sailed from Calcutta in April 1883 and reached Gravesend in the middle of May; they were accompanied by the Bankipur Fräulein Gause and by a young Bengali, Kumad, entrusted to Henry's care. Henry, taking the eldest child Letty with him, went almost at once to Scotland to see his mother, brother and sisters at St. Mungo's Cottage, Culross, and to look for a furnished house nearby where his furlough might be spent. Annette, with the younger children, stayed in London, in hotel and lodgings, to wait upon dentist and aurist. She found London less attractive than did her children. This was their first experience of England.

On the first day of all "Letty and Willy lay down on their faces in Charing Cross Station to look down a grating." Willy and Tutu were taken on the underground—then fairly new but not electrified—and found it enchanting. Not so did Annette find it in her endeavours to arrive at Notting Hill Gate by a route of Henry's choosing.

28/5/83.

Obedient to your orders I conquered the temptation of the omnibus and wended my way to the subterranean regions. There I

### *Scottish Interlude*

choked and coughed till I found myself in the free air at Latimer Road. Here an uneasy sense of error came over me. I inquired for Notting Hill Gate. The stout porter swept half the horizon with his extended arm and took me from the train. I disconsolately crossed the line to return, as I soon found, on my *train wheels* (local colour of footsteps). I looked in vain for any class of carriage but a third, so I deposited my troubles among the people and conversed with a very decent and forlorn woman about my whereabouts.

Arrived at Notting Hill I rebelled at being taken back to Edgware Road and got out to take a cab. But the British public is not allowed to do as it likes. I was told I could not go out of the station. Fate seemed to doom me to waiting for another train and to breathing again the lower air. After some discussion with a juvenile official, the pleasing news was conveyed to me that for a consideration I would be allowed to leave the station. The said consideration amounting only to threepence and a long waiting for a receipt, I availed myself of the mercies of the Company and, a free woman, took a cab in Notting Hill and returned to the bosom of my family.

See now the interesting consequences of wifely obedience. You may say that you did not tell me to go to Latimer Road, but you will admit that I should not have gone there, had you not told me to go by Underground.

Henry's answering comment came by return of post and was slightly unfeeling.

30/5/83.

I am very sorry for your mishaps by the Underground, but they only prove that you should have begun earlier to use the line.

His account of the household at St. Mungo's was mixed. Mamma, at 88, was "very helpless now as regards walking . . . but comfortable and as happy as so old a person can be."

Phemie does nothing except amuse herself and feed her birds. David is a dreadful talker and lets nobody else speak but he reads to his mother and is as simple and amiable as ever. . . . He is a town councillor; he bought an empty house for which he pays 20/- a year and this enables him to have a vote for the member etc. . . . On the whole the borough seem to be proud of him. . . . He hunts occasionally.

The mainstay of St. Mungo's was Maggie, widowed less than two years before by the death of Stephen Bell of Eyemouth and

### *India Called Them*

now come to take charge of "two helpless women and a mooning man." "She is the mast of the ship and were she to retire for a moment the sails would flop miserably on deck." Maggie, "a noble woman," was and remained Henry's favourite sister and later established warm friendship with Annette and the children. But at this stage she was very much of a widow; not unreasonably Henry found her renunciation of all happiness and her desire for the grave a little depressing. And he was not prepared to leave Letty even for a week in Maggie's charge. "Maggie wants to make a Christian of her and I objected."

But though St. Mungo's appeared to Henry "too much of a hospital for decayed ladies and gentlemen," it was at least a hospital sufficiently endowed for its modest needs. Henry sent to Annette a tabular statement of the "house income" totalling £380 a year; this included a remittance of £60 from Allie and "£84 (not including the £5 to David)" from Henry himself. With this and some occasional royalties on coal, Mamma had even been able to deposit nearly £400 in the bank.

Whatever Henry might say to Annette about his relations at St. Mungo's did not affect his and her determination to settle as near as possible to them for his furlough. Only one suitable house presented itself and that cost more than they wanted to afford. But Keavil was a very attractive house with charming grounds,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Dunfermline, within easy reach of all Henry's relations, and with room for the active hospitality which both of them enjoyed. So Henry took Keavil; there for nearly a year the family were together; they filled it with friends and relations. Annette's sister Fanny with her husband James, two boys and a nurse were there for six months; they even brought for a fortnight old Mrs. Mowatt, James's mother. Henry's Indian protégé Kumad was there for nearly two months. David was there several times; on one occasion at least, through falling off a horse, he overstayed his welcome. Maggie, Allie's wife Libbie, and other Beveridges came, of course. So did Annette's old friends the Turners of Stockport, who were to be so important to her children later. There was added to the household too at this time another indispensable member. On June 25th Annette noted in her diary, "Fräulein Emma Vogel entered our employ as nursery governess at £23 per annum." This was the *aller-*

### *Scottish Interlude*

*liebste Fräulein* from Halle-an-der-Saale to whose teaching Annette's son, more than sixty years after, attributed his ability still to talk German.

The real point of Keavil was that Henry was there practically all the time with Annette and the children. It was a continuation for a year of the home that they had together for three years at Bankipur, a home in a healthier climate, physically and mentally. Annette regarded it as a means of weaning the children from India. It was also a grand opportunity of studying them and of recording them. Towards the end of the time in Keavil, in March 1884, she wrote a 2,000-word memorandum about them.

They have all much improved in health since coming to Scotland and appear to have left India out of their scheme of life. They never use a Hindustani word and show a curious trace of irritation if any such are used to them. . . .

Letty is now six years and eight months old. Slender and tall she promises by her loose build and long limbs to resemble the Beveridge family and her father in figure. Her hair is of the colour of a chestnut husk. She is an excellent walker and active in movement. She is bookish already—taking to books as indeed does Willy in his younger measure as ducks to water. . . . She now rarely shows the irritability of temper which perplexed us so much in India. She retains the sensitiveness which marked her always to sad impressions. . . . Quite lately I read a little poem to her of the death of a collier's boy—a simple pathetic poem—she cried most naturally and was long to comfort. Afterwards she read it to herself and told me it did not seem so sad. "Why not?" I asked. "Because I cannot read it so well," she answered.

Up to this time she has had a number of books read to her of which I remember the following. \*Masterman Ready (two or three times), Crofton Boys (twice), Feats on the Fiord, \*Early Lessons, Little Arthur's History (twice), \*Old Deccan Days (many many times) and other fairy stories. . . . Many children's German books have been read by her. Willie has had several of the above books read to him but he does not yet follow the English sufficiently well for him to read with Letty. (\*=Willie's readings).

Letty likes to hear and to read poetry. Just now Young Lochinvar, Lord Ullin's daughter, The Blind Boy, and "Original Poems" are her favourites. On the 8th of this month

### *India Called Them*

all three children listened with attention to their Papa's reading the "Ancient Mariner." Tutu liked the sound, Willie found the Albatross in Wood's Natural History and was with Letty much interested in the poem.

She is very loving to me and helpful to me in my deafness. Like her father she seems always to have one ear open for me. . . . She has many *ways* like her father. It was amusing that one day he commented to me on a curious little mannerism of Letty's—a rolling up of her eyes into their corner when shy or commoved. I was able to show him in it his own identical gesture.

Willie was five years old on the 6th of this month. He is slim and compact and tall—has very fair hair and loving large blue eyes. . . . He spends much play-time in writing series of arithmetical and multiplication statements very neatly. . . . One of the distinct traits in Willie's character is his accuracy of statement. He speaks deliberately and requires it in others. One critical ear is always open for Tutu's correction. He allows no lapses into mistake. . . . I was one day in the twilight reading a message from Fräulein to the effect that she could not find Willie's Hosenträger. I did not know the word and did not pronounce the modification. "Träger" Mamma, came the correction from the little son of 4½ years. He is not dictatorial in his corrections but aggrieved as one who has the right to defend.

When we come to my Tutu not much can be said as to acquirements, for she is 3½ years old. Her hair is curly, a delicate piquant little face, her figure rotund. . . . For about twenty minutes daily she does lessons, and has perused with much assistance from a forefinger two pages of a German reading book. . . . She has given up the stately dance in which she used to don a sari and move slowly before my bedroom fire in Bankipur to the music of Bogmonia's song. She now dances jigs with immense energy.

The children and Henry held the centre of the stage at Keavil. The stay there gave plenty of opportunity of showing off the children to relations, and particularly to Jemima, their grannie, in her 88th year; during this stay, Jemima's home at St. Mungo's, Culross, was given up for another house called Durham, Torryburn, but each was equally within reach. The stay in Scotland gave Henry the chance of seeing all his kin; he escorted David to be made an elder of Culross; he went for a walking tour with Allie to Glencoe; he went to the funeral of his cousin Louisa at

### *Scottish Interlude*

Edinburgh. And he insisted on buying a waggonette; this was an extravagance which Annette always remembered against him. Keavil *was* more than she thought they ought to afford, but it was worth the cost.

Annette's sister Fanny and her family came not as guests but to share expenses. This part of the furlough plan did not work out well, as Fanny's two boys both got scarlet fever and for some time had to be isolated. Nor did it prove easy for the two families to live together. When after nearly six months Fanny and all her party left, Annette's diary records: "We felt as if a cord that had held us too tight had snapped." There was trouble still to come. On the last day of April, when Annette and her family left beautiful Keavil, they met on the way in Dunfermline letters from James and Fanny quarrelling about the expenses. Winter succeeded summer in the family relations.

By that time Henry and Annette's plans were cut and dried. He had had enough holiday and did not take all the furlough he could; he got permission to return to work in June; this meant sailing in May and gratified his desire to travel to India at an unusual time. The trio of children were to be left at a friend's school in England. Annette was to follow Henry to India in the autumn. She had insured herself against the time when she would have no care of children by getting the consent of Countess of Noer to translate from German the Count's *History of the Emperor Akbar*.

The journey south was made on this occasion by steamer from Granton to London. There followed the usual procedure of staying in a hotel for a day or two and searching for lodgings. These were found in Brompton Square. There Annette established herself and her brood till the time should come for them to part. From there at 7.40 a.m. on May 23rd she saw Henry off by train at Victoria; for the sake of economy he was going to India by the Rubattino Line from Genoa.

*I feel like Mahomet's coffin suspended between my broken family.*

Annette from London to Henry in Calcutta,  
October 5, 1884.

*You know my darling you once solemnly adjured me not to fail in my duty towards you but to let you know when I thought you were wrong.*

Henry in Suez Canal to Annette in London,  
June 2, 1884.

*Perhaps I know now about you several things which you would be surprised to learn, so do not make more confessions till we are together.*

Annette from London to Henry in Calcutta,  
June 23, 1884.

*India is getting very unpleasant with the strife between natives and Europeans.*

Henry from Calcutta to Annette in London,  
August 23, 1884.

## Chapter XIII

### THE FAMILY IS BROKEN

“**H**OW unhappy you looked that day when you saw me off at Victoria.” So Henry wrote later of the first time in May 1884 when he and Annette were to be divided with half the world between them. The separation was not for long. Annette was planning to follow him in six months’ time. But that would mean parting from the trio of children. They were to stay behind in Southport, at a small private school called Bingfield, kept by a family friend of the Unitarian connection called Fanny Lewin. Henry and Annette had been over to see the school at Southport and Fanny Lewin had spent a week at Keavil getting to know her charges; Annette left nothing to chance. The trio would be in the special charge of Fräulein Emma Vogel, engaged the previous year as nursery governess and already established for all time in the family affections. They would be within easy reach of the Turners, two of Annette’s oldest and dearest friends; childless themselves, these two were adopted as Uncle Henry and Aunt Alice; with them all holidays could be spent. The plan for the children seemed a good one.

It was not due to be put in practice, however, till the autumn. Meanwhile, Annette, with her retinue of the three children and Fräulein, wandered about from one set of lodgings to another; often the retinue was increased by Kumad, Henry’s Indian boy protégé. For most of the time they had to be in London or near it so that Annette might visit her nasal surgeon. Once or twice they found lodgings afieid—in Stratford and Malvern; there they exercised their legs upon many hills.

The children were a delight, but they were also a grief. As Annette confessed to her diary, she had at times bad attacks of weakness about leaving them. She described herself as like Mahomet’s coffin suspended between her broken family.

This first distant separation led, of course, to a great outpouring of letters, beginning from Henry in Genoa where he embarked, and continuing daily or twice daily all the way to Bombay. Near the end of the voyage Henry wrote:



## *India Called Them*

10/6/84.

I am pleased to think that I have got over so much of the voyage without the help of cards or other games and without greatly missing them. Writing to you has been a great pleasure and occupation. They laugh at me for writing so much.

Annette decided at the beginning that the proper way to write to Henry was in fragments every day, though the post would go only weekly.

You will get anything new and I shall be spared the waiting a week to talk to you.

Naturally in this first separation the two wrote about themselves and one another and their relations. They plunged with zest into a discussion of why sometimes they disagreed and what they should do about it.

In the Canal, 2/6/84.

You asked me on the day I left you to forget that we had ever disagreed. I am not sure however if that is possible or if it is the best thing for us to do. I rather think that we should dwell somewhat, though not much, on our disagreements and consider why they occurred and how they may be prevented in future.

Henry, with his love of teasing thoughts and of looking at the other side of the stuff, wanted to examine disagreements. He gave some advice to Annette which was obviously sound.

Dean Stanley remarked once that a person who did not hear well got the advantage of concentration of thought from being less subject to interruption but also incurred danger of forming opinions on insufficient evidence. I think your deficient hearing is apt to strengthen you unduly in your own opinion, because it may lead to your thinking that those around you are more convinced by your argument than they really are. It is difficult, my dear wife, to carry on a calm argument with a person who does not hear well, for in talking the voice is raised and the discussion is from physical causes apt to assume an angry pitch.

Henry sweetened his pill with a characteristic bit of self-depreciation. Not only deaf persons but all people of strong opinions were apt to over-estimate the extent to which they convinced their listeners.

### *The Family is Broken*

I know from my own experience that I have often been shocked to find how much less people agreed with me than I thought they did. Sometimes I have been tempted to accuse them of treachery or prevarication for their expressing afterwards the very opposite of what they had seemed to say. But I believe that in most cases the fact really was that they never had agreed with me and that I had too readily taken their silence or their apparent assent for a real one.

Having sweetened his pill Henry went on to administer it:

In the disagreeable letter which Fanny sent to you there was one expression which struck me. She said you spoke as though you were always in the right and never thought of the possibility of your being at any time utterly in the wrong. The remark applies to her much more than to you but it expresses a danger to which high and vehement natures are always exposed. . . .

You know, my darling, you once solemnly adjured me not to fail in my duty towards you but to let you know when I thought you were wrong.

Henry's citation of Annette's sister Fanny in the letter from the Canal was a shrewd blow, as he meant it to be. Henry had a poor opinion of Fanny, as Annette knew. One of the recurrent subjects of discussion between the two was as to the kind of letter to write in answer to something unpleasant from Fanny. On this Henry had defined his attitude early in the marriage when suggesting that an answer which Annette had written should not be sent at all.

29/9/78.

I do not think you can do Fanny any good by lecturing her. I fancy you have done so more or less all your life but have you improved her? . . . It may be cowardice that prevents me from speaking to people plainly but still I think that plain-speaking should not be resorted to unless it is likely to do good. Fanny knows we don't approve of her style of writing and if she won't listen to us and if James is powerless or endures her letters what can we do?

The letter from the Canal, by some accident, went to New York and did not reach Annette for more than a month: with Henry's handwriting such accidents were not uncommon; on one occasion luggage which he addressed to two of his children who were staying at Carr Bridge in Inverness failed for some

## *India Called Them*

weeks to arrive there; enquiry revealed that the railway officials had read Henry's "Carr Bridge" as "Cambridge."

Annette did not have to wait for the New York post to know what Henry had said. According to custom, Henry followed his letter of June 2nd which "might give pain" but which he felt it his "duty to write," by a love letter. "You know that I love you and that I feel infinitely indebted to you for all your goodness to me." Annette was slightly puzzled, but the letters which she did receive at the time were enough to show her what was in the letter that she did not see till later. And as usual she had her answer. She was certain of her love and Henry's. She thought that continuing to dwell on disagreements was "like squinting at a smut on one's face in place of looking at a pleasing landscape." And Henry, of course, agreed with this:

I think that we are both rather too critical and too much inclined to take everything au serieux. It is right to be serious and to endeavour to attach everything to fundamental principles, but this may sometimes induce mistakes by making one break butterflies on wheels, in other words attaching too much importance to things. Looking back to our disagreements it seems that very few of them were about really important matters.

Henry was never content with loving correction of Annette's faults. He was always ready to claim or admit faults of his own. He made at this time a notable confession to Annette, led thereto by a chance encounter on board.

One of Henry's fellow-passengers was an English Colonel who joined the ship at Naples. He brought with him, to see him off, a lady whom Henry at first mistakenly took to be his wife and later, perhaps as wrongly, took to be his light of love.

28/5/84.

The English Colonel and his wife have turned out to be a disappointment. The Colonel is a ragged ruffianly looking man . . . and the wife turned out to be an Italian neither fair nor honest.

4/6/84.

I confess that when I saw him—an Englishman and a man of fifty coming on board with a bold proud Fiorantina, I felt disgusted. I thought of our dear little Tutu and of how a man of his years "could force from famine the caress of love" or have sunk to such bitter waters for refreshment. But perhaps he was only philandering.

### *The Family is Broken*

The only facts established against the Colonel were that he brought the lady to luncheon to see him off and that thereafter he wrote to her in Italian interminable letters which, so Henry said, consisted almost wholly of guide-book descriptions of the scenery. Henry came later to admit that the Colonel was "a better man than I thought," though after thirty-six years in India, "like most old Anglo-Indians rather cracked."

But reflection on the supposed delinquencies of the Colonel naturally turned Henry's thoughts inward upon himself. The day after the letter given above he wrote to Annette.

5 June 1884. In the Red Sea.

My dearest,

I am going to make a bit of a confession to you. I think I ought to do so for I cannot bear that you should think me better than I am. I crave your love and hope that I may always have it but I would like you to love me with all my faults and not in ignorance of them. . . .

I was perfectly faithful to Jeannie and so I have been and trust always shall be to you but before I knew either of you I was not virtuous. I struggled with my passions and never set myself to do wickedness but I was not pure and went wrong. . . .

Do not let me lose your love for thus speaking the truth. . . . My dear, I was no saint in my youth. I was keenly alive to beauty and to the influence of women and the fact that I had never learned to dance or otherwise make myself agreeable to women and that all mention of beauty etc. was suppressed in our house only added fuel to the flame which consumed me.

Shall I go further and tell you that I thought that the flame had somewhat burnt out when I married you and that I was not conscious of being drawn to you by strong sexual ardour. Married to you, however, I found the flame revive and I have had exquisite pleasure in holding you in my arms and in pouring myself into you.

Forgive the expression, dear. It is correct and it is your loving husband who uses it.

I have never consciously misled you on the subject mentioned in this letter. . . .

But now, my dear, I feel better for having told you the truth. Now perhaps you will understand why I felt that you were a little hard on poor Roma Bai. Conscious myself that I had been a much greater sinner than she, I felt pity and thought she was not very wicked. . . .

My Darling, if you are not too deeply hurt by what I have told you, telegraph to me that you still love me. I feel as if I could not

### *India Called Them*

bear the suspense of a reply by post. But, no, I won't ask this. Only do what you think proper. . . .

P.S. Now perhaps you may understand better what I told you about my feeling Rousseau to be my sort of spiritual father.

Whether Annette telegraphed in answer to this is not clear. What she wrote left Henry in no doubt that her love for him was increased rather than diminished. She too added a postscript:

P.S. Perhaps I know about you several things which you would be surprised to learn, so do not make more confessions till we are together.

Soon after, Henry, in Calcutta, read an article called "The Christian Harem," and tried to inveigle Annette into a discussion of the relations of men and women generally and of differing moral standards. Annette did her best for him—even said she would read the article and perhaps review it—but she was not really interested. "Women don't know one another in these delicate matters because we do not discuss them." That was Annette's experience sixty years ago. To Henry she was content to say, having studied Balzac: "I conclude that we are his rarest aves—we combine marriage and love."

There was never a conclusion more sure. Two days after his confession, nine years from marriage, Henry sent Annette a love letter of purest Beveridgian vintage.

7/6/84.

Has Mr. Woakes done you any good? Never mind, my dear, I sometimes think I like you better for requiring my help. If you could hear well there is nothing I could do for you except love you. You are so much quicker and cleverer than I in all practical matters that, if it were not for your deafness, you would leave me hopelessly behind. Of course you know, however, that I should be delighted to see you restored and able to enjoy fully the company of others.

Do you remember the lines in *In Memoriam* "But he was strong where I was weak etc. etc!" I think this applies to you for you are strong where I am weak, though I cannot say that the converse of this is true. I think if I had not married you I would have abandoned society and been a Bohemian. You have raised me, my dear, and strengthened me and I feel at times so strong and self-contained in consequence. When they are all speaking of what I do not understand



*Trio at Southport in 1885*



## *The Family is Broken*

I do not feel lonely or timid. I feel I have a rock that I can go to. That rock is my wife and family.

Carlyle says of Cromwell's soldiers: They feared God and so soon lost all other kind of fear. I fear to do anything that may disgrace my wife and family, or make Annette sorry for me, and so I do not think I have much other fear. The Governor-General, the Lieutenant-Governor, and the High Court all seem to me mere words and collections of words. Or they are like the sea which can come thus far and no further. A steamer in a storm is safe, so long as she does not allow the waves to come aboard and put out the fires of her engines. When this happens, as in the case of the luckless London, she is lost indeed. So a man, however he be buffeted by the outside world, is safe so long as he keeps the sacred hearth-fire alive. But if he allow the great waters of the outside to come in and quench the flame of his inner heart then: Eleu loro he is borne down with the dying (isn't this expression in a song in *Marmion*?)

Lighted by confession, Henry felt even more able to expand to Annette. "It seems to me that I write ever and cover reams of paper." She learned not only about the wicked Colonel, but about all the rest of the ship's company, including the Chevalier Captain whose book on the art of navigation Henry dutifully tried to understand, and an Italian youngster, Gessi, whose father, campaigning with Gordon against slave-traders, had died in the Soudan and who, like every other stray creature that crossed Henry's path, saw in him a friend in need.

He speaks and writes three languages he says and he can play the piano well and can climb like a monkey but of course he has no common sense. He has taken it into his head that I can do something for him and would like I daresay to come with me to India, but I am not going to take him. His connections and claims are Egyptian and he must just have patience till Gordon comes back from Khartum.

Annette was not much interested in discussing sex relations. That problem for her was completely and happily settled. There were other problems on which she was prepared to argue with Henry for ever. One was religion; this blazed up later into considerable dispute, when the children came of age to be sent regularly to church or not to be sent. Another was India, and the relations of British and Indians there. This blazed now.

Annette, though she never lost her many Indian friends, had



### *India Called Them*

already changed in feeling about India. She had come out in public opposition to Henry on the Ilbert Bill; when she reached London in the spring of 1883, she was taken to task severely by Miss Manning of the National Indian Association and other friends of her pro-Indian past for her letter to the *Englishman* against the Bill. Henry, while sorry about the letter, defended it as temperately worded. But then, Henry was prepared to defend anything. Annette seldom erred on the side of mildness when her feelings were roused. In this letter she had written that the social ideas of India were still on the outer verge of civilization; in recalling some of the events of the Sepoy Mutiny she had used the term "savages." Annette was a bonny fighter, prepared in this as in other matters to defend herself by carrying the war into the enemy's country. On Miss Manning's attack she had written to Henry at the time:

9/6/83.

Except for your regret, I cannot regret having written the letter to the *Englishman*. I think it very extraordinary that any people should find fault with the calling of the murderers of women and children "savages." I should call any man and any nation a savage who did it. So should I, speaking as an English woman, call uncivilised a people which cares about stone idols, enjoys child marriage and secludes its women, and where at every point the fact of sex is present to the mind. I call it uncivilised in any nation when I see two people together and the notion of their being a *man* and a *woman* is the first suggested by their manner and not the more commonplace one (as in England) of *two* people.

This was Annette's central position. She thought India uncivilized, not because she was English but because she was a woman.

When, in the year after the Ilbert Bill and Annette's letter, Henry reached India, he felt at once the discomfort of roused racial feeling. He was posted to Calcutta, to take the place of a colleague on leave as judge for the twenty-four Pergunnahs. He wrote from there in August, pouring out his thoughts as he sat alone after dinner in the United Services Club, beneath the swinging punkah.

23/8/84.

I am longing to see you once more and to talk to you and yet I sometimes feel doubtful if you will be happy here. India is getting

### *The Family is Broken*

very unpleasant with the strife between natives and Europeans. Two hostile camps are being formed and it is becoming more and more difficult to belong to both. Each has its watchword and each challenges whoever wishes to enter. I have never suppressed my opinions and I never shall but there are many people who do not like me in consequence. Not, I hope, that I care much for this but still one who is outside of either camp and yet would like to enter both and stride about in them feels rather lonely. It is a fine thing to dwell apart like a star, but the one who does that must have the strength of a star. Sometimes when I hear English music or see the faces of English children I feel as if there was a great gulf between me and the natives. I think of a Scotch burn dancing down under the hawthorns and every now and then resting in a clear pool and I say is not this fairer or at least more homelike than this great turbid, rolling Hooghly which sucks swimmers under and breeds sharks and crocodiles. And yet it is a grand river too. To see it sometimes, when coming back from the Howrah Station at night, shining in the moonlight and rushing under the bridge is a thing to be remembered. The firm, tall-masted ships, the strange boats plying on it, the unusual foliage on its banks are all striking. Coming back from Bow Reach the other day we passed close by the King of Oude's palaces and I saw the house for the birds, the palace of the chief queen, the peacocks and the thousands of pigeons. It was all strange and fantastic but yet gorgeous too. Poor Bishop's College which its founder probably thought would become an Oxford is now given up to engineering.

I am afraid I am getting disconnected and so I shall stop for tonight. Good night my darling. I shall go and read Mr. Justice Field on Landholding. It is a good book apparently and I would advise you to read it.

A few weeks later came another letter in the same strain.

13/9/84.

My darling, I hope and trust that you and I will not fall out on the native question. I am rather lonely about it here and want sympathy. I may be all wrong but I have been pretty faithful to the Bengalees for a quarter of a century and am too old to change now. The evil is that it is more and more difficult to remain neutral or impartial. The High Court I think has never sunk so low as it now is. There is hardly a clever man in it except Field and he is besotted with arrogance.

The Marquis of Ripon is a feeble soul such as a pervert might be expected to be, and Thompson honest to the backbone is in weak health and is being gradually shoved by circumstances into the arms

### *India Called Them*

of the Anglo-Indian Defence Association. I see no deliverer anywhere and no one who might be like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

Henry, however, was not wholly without kindred spirits. He told Annette of a dinner that he had given to Shane, Stack and Cotton, and about the last of these added:

I think I shall cultivate Cotton. There is something interesting about him. I always remember that he came to our marriage. I like his outspokenness and want of canny reserve. I have enough of that in myself.

Cotton, who became Chief Commissioner of Assam, and Sir Henry Cotton, K.C.S.I., was at that time going through the stage of being out of favour which he described in his Memoirs as having blocked his career for several years.<sup>1</sup>

To the letter written beneath the swinging punkah Annette answered that she thought that Henry still had a good deal of superstition about India.

22/9/84.

You desire to be kind and just and are it—you shrink from anything which seems like an assertion of superiority in any way, but the real fact is that race for race superiority is on our side. . . . If I thought that you could ideally forsake the *burn* for the Hooghly I think I should stay in England.

Here Annette stepped for a moment beyond her usual line into the Anglo-Indian camp. But she did not stay there. And before long she was to make—and keep—a vow never to be in public opposition to Henry again. His wish was realized: "Ilbert Bills and Babus shall not divide us." Henry's last letter to Annette in England was a love letter of the old style—complete with confession and literary allusions:

21/9/84.

I have been enjoying myself this day. I got the sofa carried under the punkah and then I lay and read Martineau's sermons and meditated and smoked two Burma cheroots. Don't be vexed with me for this last statement. I thought of omitting it but then I said then I would not tell her the whole truth and would make her think me more spiritual than I am. I really smoke very little.

<sup>1</sup> *Indian and Home Memories*, by Sir Henry Cotton, K.C.S.I., p. 187.

## *The Family is Broken*

Now that you are really coming and that an outburst of feeling won't make you unhappy and think that you should come at once I feel inclined to tell you how my heart cries out for you at times. My own darling shall I really see you and talk to you of the children and of ourselves and all things good and noble. I am sick to death at times of the vapidity of Anglo-Indian life and of the stupid talk of club-men. Not that I would be unfair. There are some clever, well informed men here but only one or two care for the things I care for. And the best of them cannot make up for the absence of my own true love. How shall I tell you how or why I love you. I feel that you know me so thoroughly and that you love me though fully knowing all my faults and weaknesses. Soul of my soul, may you live long and guide our children aright. Somehow when I look at the portfolio of pictures as I did last evening, I think that we must return and go and live with our children at Dresden or some such place where we can feast our eyes and our ears. But don't, my dear, accept this impulse as my deliberate thought. I have immense pleasure often in my work here and believe that in no other country could I get the same development for my faculties.

And you, too, I think, will find your true sphere in India. It was the choice of your youth and you will not forsake it. I think I could go on writing to you for ever but that would be foolish would it not? Yes, what fun we have had together. How merry we have been in one another's company. How much good have you not done me. How much I have learnt from you.

Your loving husband  
H. Beveridge.

Dear, I have been reading George Eliot. Are you not Romola, a purified and chastened Romola and one married to a man not quite so bad as Tito but still weak like him? How beautiful these concluding chapters are:—"That rare possibility of self-contemplation which comes in any complete severance from our wonted life made her judge herself as she had never done before. The compunction which is inseparable from a sympathetic nature keenly alive to the possible experience of others, began to stir in her with growing force. She questioned the justness of her own conclusions, of her own deeds."

Dear, I don't quote these words as implying any blame of you. I quote them I do not exactly know why.

I think I can imagine you speeding to our dear little Willie as Romola does to Lillo. Please read chapters 68 and 69 over again. Also the Epilogue.

### *India Called Them*

While Henry was feeling solitary in India, Annette was engaged in a determined attack on her deafness and its causes. In nearly every week, from the second half of May to the end of September, she recorded one or more visits to a Mr. Woakes, a surgeon for nose and ears. Mr. Woakes spent most of his time apparently on Annette's nose rather than on her ears; he said a catarrhic condition had caused a bone to grow out in her nose; he said sometimes that he hoped to get rid of the bone by treatment, sometimes that he must operate, and finally in September that there was no time to operate before Annette left for India. She took her son Willie with her once and he was allowed to sit on Mr. Woakes' knee and look down his mother's throat. "He regarded me altogether from a scientific point of view, with dispassionate interest," was Annette's account of this proceeding.

Mr. Woakes hurt Annette very badly and admired the way in which she stood it; he was sometimes depressed and counselling patience, and sometimes elated and optimistic. Of one of these last occasions Annette wrote:

31/7/84.

So dear! if I am not cured it must be from some extraordinary perversity on my part. He says I have the best spirits he ever saw and uttered other praises; amongst others he thinks I like to be hurt.

Henry from India was as comforting as only Henry could be.

22/6/84.

. . . Do not, dear, fret yourself about your ears. If Dr. Woakes can do you any good I shall be delighted, but if he can't I shall love you all the same. I am rather afraid of your getting dejected if he does not succeed in improving your hearing.

But never mind, my darling. If you were not deaf there would be nothing for which I could pity you and you know I always like to feel compassion for people. . . .

I should have liked to see Willie looking down your throat.

Henry was anxious, for he never wholly believed in Mr. Woakes. He consulted two doctor friends in Calcutta and they went together and turned up Mr. Woakes in the *Medical Directory* and agreed that, from the description of his qualifications there, he ought to be a good man.

## *The Family is Broken*

9/8/84.

One question put to me has been if the hearing of both ears is affected. They say that if they are, it is difficult to see anatomically that an affection of a bone in the nose could cause the deafness. However, my darling, go on with the treatment. I do not think from all inquiries I have made that Dr. Woakes' treatment can do you any injury.

There was never any trouble that Henry would not take to help any one for whom he could exercise compassion. The upshot of this year's struggle was that Annette's deafness remained as before or increased. It had reached the point already when the children had to crave an audience of her. " 'Mamma, may I say something,' they all now say."

All this doctoring meant also much expense. Reporting her expenditure in London, Annette declared that "we cannot afford to give more in charity." She declared also her intention (though in the end she did not carry it out) of travelling to India by the Italian Rubattino Line, as Henry had done, for economy. She studied Henry's financial position and reported.

12/7/84.

I read your will, my dearest, with sadness. Do you know that you have left your mother £144 per annum and that your capital, even if you count the £800 made over to the Trustees will barely bring in £120! We must indeed save hard and must not have luxuries such as charities etc. until you have enough capital to carry out your will and have repaid what is due of the children's money.

Annette had other tiresome and expensive things to do in England this year, in addition to the penance of Mr. Woakes. Her brother-in-law, James Mowatt, had insisted finally on ceasing to be her trustee; she had to find a successor and took a solicitor, the brother of an old friend. Fortunately she did not altogether trust this new trustee; that is to say, she did not allow him to change her investments. She escaped thus some heavy losses which he brought on his own sister. In due course another and more reliable trustee had to be found. By the time she had finished with it, Annette was sick of her marriage settlement. She often explored vainly the possibility of bringing it to an end.

The children and the surgeon filled most of Annette's six

### *India Called Them*

months without Henry in England. One or two of her letters recall that it was a time of acute political crisis. There were Fenian bombs in Pall Mall and Scotland Yard. There was a Franchise Bill whose rejection by the House of Lords led to a political demonstration which Annette went to see as a sightseer with an American friend.

Berkhampstead, 22-24/7/84.

Yesterday there was this great political demonstration about the Franchise Bill. I went down to Grindlay's with an American lady who lives in 12 Brompton Square and was most politely received and given a window which allowed full view. It was a marvellous sight. We could see the higher part of Trafalgar Square crowded with spectators and Parliament Square black with the throng. There was a thick band of spectators on either side of the procession and it was marvellous to me to see their permanence and their quiet manner. As for the procession, it first struck me as very dull—then I found that I had mistaken what I had come to see—for it was not for entertaining me these men were marching—then I became fascinated by the long sluggish flow of uniform soberness and felt that I was gazing on a human river. The notion of strength grew as the hours went on. Three hours we saw it pour past us. . . . There were interesting distinctions observable in the sets of men and women, for there were many women and many babies also. The 4000 agricultural labourers were an interesting set with faces full of character and there was something quite pathetic in their country flowers in the town atmosphere. Then the hatters made a great variety in the line because their tall hats followed a monotony of low crowned ones and they seemed to have a "topper" air. Cabinet-makers looked feeble and weedy—bakers were sturdy—there were perambulator makers—chiefly women—also very weedy. It was very interesting. Why was redistribution not discussed with the Franchise Bill, I wonder. I don't see how the Conservatives could be expected to give *carte blanche* to the Radicals in the matter and I think everyone must wish for a strong opposition in order to get somewhat nearer to the truth than an overwhelming force on either side would allow. Good night, my own dear love. . . .

Thursday: I believe I could be very happy living within this distance of London if there are any other not orthodox or rather tolerant people.

Annette's first idea of sailing from Genoa by the economic Rubattino Line was abandoned as part of another change of plan.

### *The Family is Broken*

Annette, unlike her full sister Fanny, had declined and to the end continued to decline to be on bad terms with her stepmother Mrs. Akroyd. On her first visit to England with Henry, when newly married, she had seen little of this other family. On this second visit she saw a great deal of them, and stayed with her stepmother at 28, Regent's Park Road whenever she was in London without Henry and the children.

This rapprochement to the other half of William Akroyd's family was made simpler by the gulf which for the moment divided Annette from her full sister Fanny. The joint occupation of Keavil had ended in an explosion. Fanny for the time being was quarrelling with Annette as she quarrelled always with Mrs. Akroyd.

Annette began to feel herself at home at 28, Regent's Park Road. She found her half-sisters Katie and Nellie interesting and attractive. She gave character sketches to Henry:

Katie is full of unexpected talents. She lacks the pressure which poverty would have given to have been an artist. Her slightest sketches are full of satisfaction to the eye. We are urging upon her the extreme desirability of getting pictures ready for an exhibition in order to lay the foundation for the wages of a useful maid to keep her neglected wardrobe in order! She reads too and has also much character, detests dress-making and has agreed with Mr. North that they shall eat beef-steak daily.

Nellie on the other hand is a regular housekeeper and first rate dress-maker. I am growing very fond of her. She has colour and character and I feel our sisterhood.

Both are certainly far removed from the commonplace.

Katie, at this time aged 29, was engaged to a Mr. North, whom she married in Rome in the following year. Nellie, aged 28, after one or two engagements, was still free. Annette discovered that Mrs. Akroyd would dearly like her to have a trip to India under Annette's wing. The proposition was put to Henry with becoming timorous circumspection, for might he not remember Annie Goldie?

Stratford-on-Avon, 6/8/84.

Now I am coming to what will surprise you, and I hope, my darling, you will not also be vexed. I see a way of greatly pleasing Mrs. Akroyd and, after all said and done, I owe her very much.



### *India Called Them*

Would you not say I should please her if I can? The long and short had best be at once said—she would like me to take Nellie to India for six months, so that she might see the country. It is not a matrimonial crusade, for this line of life appears to be sufficiently open to Nellie here. It is purely an indulgence of a desire to see the big world she wants to give her daughter. . . . Now I quite expect you to be surprised at my thinking of having another girl with me after my failure with Annie Goldie but Nellie is a very different girl. She can be sharp enough but there is a great deal besides sharpness in her. . . . She has a great admiration for you.

This last touch—indeed the whole circumspection of the approach—was needless, and Annette knew it to be needless. The same letter revealed that the finance of the expedition had already been worked out; Mrs. Akroyd would provide £100 and Nellie had savings. Annette rejected a suggestion that she should telegraph to Henry for his assent or refusal:

I knew you too well to think you would refuse her, when a refusal must do away with the revived friendliness between us.

Of course, Henry did not refuse. He approved Annette's plan of bringing Nellie with her and he got to work at once at his old game of match-making. He wrote at once from Calcutta.

29/8/84.

I am so glad that you have sent the photos. You look very handsome and triumphant as if you said: see there is my son. Willie looks rather sad in one photo but is very funny and sparrow-like in the other. I always feel that he is the delicate one of the family and if he does not thrive at Southport you might bring him out with you. My darling, don't say there is Henry at his old habit of making wild suggestions. You know I am only talking to you and you may be perfectly sure that I shall approve of whatever you do. Let us make Nellie a great success and so wipe out our discomfiture with Annie. I think that she would make a very good wife for Dr. O'Brien.

Annette did not think that Bengal would be a better health resort for her son than Southport. She decided to sail with Nellie alone on October 23rd. Four weeks before she had taken the trio to Southport and established them with Fräulein in Miss Lewin's school at Bingfield; they had been enchanted to see such quantities of sand; they had shown no fear; they promised to

### *The Family is Broken*

be very happy. Annette returned alone for last visits to Mr. Woakes, and last shopping; went back to Southport to say good-bye; went to Stourbridge to see her adopted aunt, Emma Evers, and find great changes in the town and people; called almost at the very end on her critic, Miss Manning; and so with Nellie went aboard the *Khedive* at Gravesend. She had taken Henry's advice this time about her journey—to go all the way round by sea to Calcutta.

In deciding on her mode of travel Annette had the advantage of exhaustive advice from Henry, including a memorandum of four foolscap pages written by him in the Canal and describing the disadvantages and advantages of the route to Genoa and the Rubattino line—how water actually ran from a tap in the cabin and ran out again through turning another tap, how there was a shade over the cabin light “so that if you go to bed before 11 p.m. you do not have it glaring at you,” how “they give you brandy as well as tea and coffee at 9.”

Italian seems to be the only thing spoken on board. It is spoken very distinctly and one soon begins to pick up the meaning of the conversation. I realise somewhat though what you must feel when conversation is going on in which you cannot join.

Henry always thought first of others.

*The History of Bengal is perfectly immaterial but the  
top stone of your official career is not.*

Annette from England to Henry in Calcutta,  
June 23, 1884.

*Meres said that when he got home he would tell you to  
come out at once and stop my mouth and take away my pen  
and that then I would get into the High Court.*

Henry from Calcutta to Annette in England,  
August 15, 1884.

*This is a most uninteresting place. I hope that none of you  
will ever have to live in it.*

Annette from Faridpur to Bingfield,  
December 24, 1885.

*My second son born between 4 and 5 p.m.*

Annette's Diary for October 2, 1885.

*My year at Faridpur was one of the happiest o, my life.*

Annette from Darjeeling to Henry in Calcutta,  
March 13, 1887.

## Chapter XIV

### FARIDPUR VICTORY

**T**HROUGH all this interchange of letters and plans and love-making on their first long separation ran the uncertainty as to where Annette would find Henry stationed when she arrived. His post in Calcutta as District Judge for the twenty-four Pergunnahs was temporary; he was taking the place of another on leave. When this acting appointment ended would he go up, as he might, to the High Court or to one of the newly established Appellate Benches? Would he go down; that is to say, be sent away from the centre of Government to a country district?

Henry was ambitious for himself. Annette was even more ambitious for him. When he wrote of retiring to live at Geneva or Dresden or Edinburgh and compile a History of Bengal, she answered:

23/6/84.

The History of Bengal is perfectly immaterial but the top stone of your official career is not. It is not possible for you to retire *yet*. You have not only to save money but you must round off your career. Life is certainly not long enough for two professions or religions.

Just before this she had reported to him the remark of a friend:

Mrs. Abercrombie has just come. She informs me that she is sure you are to go to the H.C. So dear! perhaps you will settle in Calcutta after all.

In India things had a different aspect. Some of Henry's Patna judgments had been harshly handled by the High Court and he was not in good odour with them. In Scotland, in the year before, Annette had sent him a report on one of his cases, and he had commented: "The H.C. has been needlessly severe and Justice Norris is an irritable man." This particular member of the High Court was one whose unfriendly judgments Henry came specially to fear; Judge Norris was described by a younger contemporary two or three years later: "a radical barrister and an amusing downright character. How he hated Indian life! He loved to tell

## *India Called Them*

us his bar stories of the Western circuit.”<sup>1</sup> It was perhaps a little hard that Henry, into whom India had been burned, should have his fate in India’s service so much affected by one who hated Indian life.

Apart altogether from his technical merits as a judge, in the state of public feeling during the middle ’eighties in India, Henry, with his Bengali sympathies, was bound to appear a dangerous man to those in authority. He did nothing to make himself look safe. He thought as badly of the High Court as they did of him. He went to the Eden Gardens, and seeing natives of India kept by a policeman out of a place to which Europeans were admitted, he wrote a letter of protest to the *Englishman*. In this he described the statue of Lord Auckland as facing the gardens and turning his back on the High Court.

The inscription below commends him for his love of the “justice which is blind to distinctions of race,” but this was written in 1848 and I suppose things have changed since then.<sup>2</sup>

Henry did not put his name to the letter but, as Annette no doubt rightly inferred, most people would spot the author. Henry’s friend Meres had reported to him early in August a remark by one of the leading judges “that he did not see why Beveridge should be passed over.” But Meres knew why:

15/8/84.

Meres said that when he got home he would tell you to come out at once and stop my mouth and take away my pen and that then I would get into the High Court.

And stop my mouth, I hope, you shall, but you will do so with kisses. I can’t help letting out occasionally though I really do try to be quiet and self-contained.

It became clear to Henry that he was not going higher. At one stage he had written to Annette that he could always fall back on Bankipur from which he had taken furlough the year before, but this was denied to him, and he did not really mind. Nor was he to be kept on in Calcutta. In July, soon after his return from

<sup>1</sup> Gerald Ritchie: *The Ritchies in India*, p. 364.

<sup>2</sup> This letter drew an answer next day signed “Trousers Shoes” whose writer asserted that all persons decently attired were allowed anywhere in the gardens and that only the dhootie-wearing part of the population were consigned to a particular part of the promenade. But Henry in a letter to Annette maintained that this was not so.

### *Faridpur Victory*

furlough while acting for the 24 Pergunnahs, he had been offered Chittagong and had impulsively and rather indignantly refused it, "thinking it was a dodge to get me out of Calcutta"; later Henry felt that he had rather put his foot in it in this affair. By the middle of September he realized that the chances were against his staying in Calcutta:

13/9/84.

Browne will take charge on 1st November and I doubt if the Govt. will have the courage to make me additional in opposition to the clamorous Charles. . . . The said Charles is a dreadful ass. When he got engaged they say he telegraphed home—Engaged Marquis Niece. She is very nice and I am sure he bores her dreadfully about his grievances. . . .

At present my inclination is to sit quiet and say and do nothing. If they keep me in Calcutta I shall be glad and if not I shall philosophise. I am very glad and am grateful to Govt. that I have been allowed to be in Calcutta for these months. It has been a sort of rounding off of my service, to use your happy expression, and has enabled me to see things which I would not otherwise have seen. The Eden Gardens are a perpetual delight to me.

Towards the end of September, Henry wrote to Sir John Edgar, the Secretary to the Bengal Government, to ask what was to happen to him. He received the answer that he was to be appointed to Faridpur, in his rank of District and Sessions Judge, as from the beginning of November. Faridpur was a district on the Ganges, next door to Henry's earlier district of Bakarganj, and as completely part of the Bengal backwoods.

Annette heard of Henry's appointment to Faridpur just before she herself started for India with her half-sister Nellie Akroyd. The news was a severe disappointment. It meant not merely that Henry was not being promoted either to the High Court or to one of the Appellate Benches; Annette had probably made up her mind that the first of these at least was not an early probability. It meant much worse than that. Going to Faridpur was relegation. As Henry himself admitted later, it made him again a bacha sahib, a small man instead of a bigwig. It knocked endways Annette's plan of introducing Nellie to Indian society. There was no society in Faridpur.

On the day before she left London Annette sent a telegram

### *India Called Them*

to Henry telling him to "claim Bankipur." She followed this with a letter which Henry did not keep, but whose nature can be inferred from Annette's character and Henry's answers. In these replies he defended himself, the Government and Faridpur.

U.S. Club, 28/10/84.

My dear Love,

I got your telegram of the 21st telling me to claim Bankipur but the matter had already been settled and besides I have an aversion to claiming anything. I did not give up Bankipur in my letter to Edgar but I left it to them and the result is Faridpur. I don't think it will suit us badly. It is quiet and healthy and near Calcutta.

In other letters he embroidered these themes.

Government is not to blame in the matter, as I told them I wanted a Bengali district. . . .

Faridpur is small and dull certainly but nobody ever called it unhealthy. . . . Surely if you lived for three years in a feverish place like Rangpur and nursed a child there you can live for a few months at a place which is certainly not feverish.

If you want to go the Drawing Rooms etc. it will not be difficult to manage.

The station is pretty and has a noble avenue.

The most gallant part of these letters was the defence of Faridpur.

It might be a healthy station, but on her way out Annette had heard at Madras that Mr. Pawsey, the Magistrate of Faridpur, had just died there of cholera. All that Henry could say was that "Pawsey had not a strong constitution and so you need not be afraid on my account. The epidemic will in all probability have ceased long before you arrive in Calcutta."

Faridpur might have a noble avenue, but it lacked bread, meat, drinking water and coal. "I have been arranging," wrote the ever-thoughtful Henry, "about getting drinking water from the Padima and about improving the bread." How Annette did ultimately secure these necessities of life she described in letters to the children at Bingfield:

24/12/84.

This is a most uninteresting place. I hope none of you will ever have to live in this place, but if you do you will find much that is charming to the eye. One thing I do not like at all; we can get no

### *Faridpur Victory*

meat to eat unless we send to Calcutta which is very far. On Christmas day we had some beef and the gentlemen were highly pleased. Now how should you like to get meat only once in three weeks?

Sometimes supply was interrupted by floods.

18/9/85.

Since the railway was broken we have not been able to have any bread till last night when the baker of Faridpur made some for us. It was curious bread, so sticky that I think he meant to gum our mouths up so that we should not speak. I do not know when we shall have more bread.

Drinking water depended on boiling and filtering.

22/3/85.

Every few days a bullock cart goes down to the big river and on it are fastened two immense black jars and these are brought back full of water from the river. Then this is boiled and filtered before we drink it.

Faridpur, finally, might be "near Calcutta," but the idea that it was a convenient centre from which to attend vice-regal drawing-rooms was one of Henry's brighter flights of fancy. To reach Faridpur from Calcutta meant a train journey by night without a sleeper ("You will travel down in the Ladies Compartment," urged Henry, "and go early so as to get a good seat."), followed by a Hobson's choice either of a six-hour jolt for twenty miles in a palki or a row of seventeen miles in a boat, followed by three miles of palki. To reach Calcutta from Faridpur meant the same thing in reverse. The method by which ultimately Annette was brought to Faridpur by Henry made demands on her knowledge of French as well as of English.

Faridpur, 5/12/84.

Of course you know now that I shall not meet you at Rajbari but at Goalundo. The train is advertised to be due at Goalundo before 6 but it seldom comes in before 7 a.m. I will bring a khitmutgar and a chuprassy with me and will give you chota hazri. . . .

I have got a swift fishing boat twenty yards long and twelve feet broad to take me and to bring us back. There will be eight oars and we will travel swiftly. Another boat will bring the servants and the baggage. Il n' ya pas de lieu d'aisance dans le bateau mais j' apporterai



### *India Called Them*

des petites vaisseaux ou assiettes et tu puis te servir d'elles et apres les jeter hors de la fenetre.

As Annette observed at this time, Henry was a very thoughtful man.

In his defence of Faridpur, Henry was on stronger ground in reminding Annette that she had written once that it was more important to choose a place which suited him than one which suited her, as he would have much more of it. He was on stronger ground still in arguing that life at Faridpur would be cheap.

15/11/84.

We must live quietly and economically and there is no station where we can do that better than at Faridpur. A carriage is not required and there will be few dinner parties. I am not sorry I have escaped Patna for it was expensive and I could not have set up there without running into debt.

Annette saw all this. She saw also that it would be absurd to quarrel with Henry about anything so unimportant as the particular spot in which she should live with him in India. She understood him when he pleaded: "I don't think you would really have wanted me to lower myself by canvassing for a better station." After her telegram and first letter of protest, her next letter, written on the voyage "one day out from Malta," was a love letter pure and simple:

1/11/84.

The secret of happiness which we have known by the library fire for example at Keavil is that each should show something unexpected in speech and character. . . . Now sometimes you yawn and tell me not to wanton in commonplaces. Do I ever yawn and tell you not to be anything? You are perhaps not aware that you are much more than loveable to me. You are *very interesting*.

And when on the last day of November she met Henry at Calcutta, she had accepted Faridpur completely. He went back almost at once to his station. Annette stayed in Calcutta only long enough to make a few practical arrangements.

3/12/84.

I have had a Committee with the khansamah and shall make a good many purchases. I am longing to be back quietly with you and my work. . . .

## *Faridpur Victory*

4/12/84.

I am trying to do all you suggest. . . . Fourteen packages of various kinds have gone off now. . . . You are certainly, my dear, a very thoughtful man! You have taken too much trouble for us. I *do* appreciate it, however, even if I think we might have roughed it at Faridpur. I am longing to be with you.

She responded also to his request for a set of gardening tools for a gentleman.

Faridpur, 4/12/84.

Having become a bacha sahib I think of taking to gardening. The garden here is so pretty that it tempts one to garden.

Within a week of reaching Calcutta, Annette proceeded by night train and by swift fishing boat to join Henry at Faridpur, though she did not go to the house he had pictured to her at first—the Circuit House of two bedrooms and three bathrooms. Henry, on second thoughts, had contrived to get hold of the one other available house—larger though not so dry, and had prepared it for Annette's coming: "The house has been cleaned up somewhat and the pipul trees growing on the roof have been cut down."

There was one member of the party whom these arrangements did not suit at all, and who had, perhaps, a just grievance against them. In the few days she had in Calcutta, Annette contrived to take Nellie to several parties, but had to confess that things were not going well:

3/12/84.

Nellie was much mortified last night [at the Saturday Club] because no partners were introduced to her and mortification in an impulsive person makes very disagreeable results.

Henry had always thought Nellie a handful. A few years before he had reported to Annette in Shillong that "Miss Nellie's intended is a coal merchant named Wooley and he is 6 ft. 6 ins. in height. He will need all that to keep Nellie in awe." That particular intended had felt himself or had been felt unequal to his task. Nellie had come out to India untrammelled, but with no idea of sitting in the flats and floods of Faridpur. Henry realized what was expected of him: "I think that when we get

### *India Called Them*

a dog-cart, a buggy, three horses, and an elephant, for Nellie—we will stop—till next pay day."

But Henry did not have to provide any of these things. One of the rooms in the Faridpur house was marked "Aunt Nellie's room" in the plan which Annette sent to the trio in Southport, but Nellie never came to Faridpur. She was invited by new-made friends to visit more interesting places; there was no lack of hospitality in India. In a few months Annette got news that Nellie had engaged herself to Mr. Fowler of the Salt Department, and on October 7, 1885, the marriage took place in London. Only a week before Annette's other half-sister had been married in Rome to Mr. North. So all William Akroyd's surviving daughters reached the goal appointed for Victorian young ladies. Six months after, their brother, young William Akroyd, married in New Zealand and settled there.

Henry and Annette, reunited and left to themselves in Faridpur, settled down to a second honeymoon. Their children had become the subject of a monthly cheque of £30 to Miss Lewin and of weekly letters to Southport. There were no outlying districts for Henry to visit for sessions as there had been at Rangpur. They were never separated except for a few days when Henry went to consult libraries in Calcutta. As a consequence, for the year 1885 almost alone in all their married life, there are no letters at all between Henry and Annette. But the trio at Southport were at an age to receive letters and to write them. From these and from Annette's diary the nature of life in Faridpur sixty years ago can be seen.

It had few amenities. The simplest comforts of life were hard to come by. There was hardly any society: as compared with the rounds of dinners and parties at Bankipur three years before, and at Calcutta in later years, there is something almost pathetic in Annette's rare diary references to "good tennis" or "very good tennis." There were no roads to justify a carriage; the only outing recorded by Annette this year was a boat journey through flooded country. The simple excitements of life at Faridpur were provided by these floods or by noxious beasts or by both in combination.

At the end of April Henry wrote to the trio that floods were expected.

## *Faridpur Victory*

We shall go everywhere in boats. It will be nice seeing all the villages and seeing the people cut their rice crops in deep water. The rice grows as fast as the water rises and the stem is often 18 or 20 feet long. When it is ripe the people go out on rafts or floating on jars and cut it.

In September serious floods had materialized. Annette described to the trio how people were living on the railway embankment as the sole dry land, or sitting in the trees, and very hungry.

There is not much water near our house and I do not see any of the sad things, but I can be sorry without seeing them, can't you.

The floods interfered with food supplies even to the judge at Faridpur. This has been described already. So also has the plague of "jungly pigs," and what Annette did to reduce the plague and how the snakes were swimming through the floods.

Amid these diversions of floods and beasts, Annette, in her 43rd year, was engaged on two major tasks. She was preparing a fourth child for Henry. She was writing her own first book.

This fourth child—a second son—was born, so Annette recorded in her diary, between 4 and 5 p.m. on October 2, 1885 two-and-a-half hours from first symptom: "a bonnie healthy little mouse and very welcome to everyone." He received the name of Herman. Annette recorded also great indignation with Henry for having been afraid that the child might endanger her life and having made plans against this. Faridpur was the next district to Bakarganj where Henry had lost Jeanie; no doubt this brought fear to his mind. The doctor at Faridpur was an Indian; and he had planned to be away at the time. When Henry urged him to stay, he declared that he had no surgical instruments if an operation became necessary. So Henry bought the instruments for him. Annette felt and said that if the doctor had no instruments, that meant that he had not dealt with a difficult birth for years, and would not be of any use in any case; after all, she was Annette and what she set herself to do she would accomplish, whether it was a child or a book.

The first book and the fourth child at Faridpur proceeded together; as Annette said afterwards, they were inseparably connected in her mind. In her first honeymoon, Annette had

### *India Called Them*

contemplated writing a book on the philosophic-religious themes which had interested her before Henry came. In her second honeymoon she set to work on a book arising from Henry's interests. As she said in her preface, this was her way of occupying "one of those *lacunae* in Anglo-Indian life when a house is filled by memories only by its children." She was at that time without knowledge of Arabic or Persian. She undertook the translation from German of the life of Emperor Akbar written by Count of Noer. The author, by birth a prince of the German Imperial House, having insisted on marrying for love without Imperial permission, had forfeited his princely title. This did not vex him, for he was a scholar and Oriental traveller by temperament. His health failed, however, and he died before completing his work on Akbar. Annette's translation was much more than a translation; it was a revised second edition involving, with Henry's help, return to the original sources. It took Annette far longer than she dreamed. Beginning in Faridpur in 1885, what she had expected to be an easy first task of translation, she took full five years and published only in 1890.

Though Annette, in 1885, was on a honeymoon, she was already the mother of three children, left in Southport with Fräulein Vogel. She was also half-way through a painful struggle with an aurist, due to return to him for an operation. The problem of whether Annette should break off her honeymoon and visit England was formally debated in March, and left formally undecided: Henry and Annette, after setting out the pros and cons of return, each reached independently the same conclusion and wrote it down in Latin: *non mihi tantam componere litem*—it is not for me to settle so difficult a dispute. The real question was where their fourth child should be born. Annette decided for Faridpur—for staying with Henry. The accounts of the trio in Southport were uniformly good. The operation should wait.

For a mother of three children in England Faridpur had one advantage which outweighed nearly everything on the other side. It gave unrivalled opportunity for saving. Henry's remark that no carriage would be needed in Faridpur was an understatement; a carriage would have been all but useless. So the horses' retinue of eight at Bankipur—coachman, three syces, three grasscutters, an old woman to grind the corn—was replaced at Faridpur by

### *Faridpur Victory*

one syce, attending Henry's old horse Judicial in retirement. The garden staff from ten at Bankipur became four at Faridpur. The total staff from numbering thirty-nine at a monthly cost of Rs. 245, became eighteen, costing Rs. 129.

The effect on Henry's financial position was notable. After six months in Faridpur, recording Annette made the following balance sheet for him.

Expenses			Receipts		
	R.	a. p.		R.	a. p.
Total Expenses	9261	5 0	Pay	13631	4 0
			Interest on		
			Investments	395	0 0
			Received for		
			Furniture	204	10 0
				<hr/>	
				14230	14 0
				9261	5 0
				<hr/>	
			Saved to June 30,	4969	9 0
			1885		

For the first—and almost the last—time in his life, Henry was spending well within his income.

The cause of economy was favoured at this moment by a change in Scotland. Jemima was already five years older than when, at 84, she had written to her Benjamin:

Dear Henry I begin to understand what age brings on as it passes over body and mind, numbing one faculty and twisting another. My feet begin to forget their hold of the ground and memory has become treachery.

But she had held on gallantly, as happy, in Henry's phrase, as so old a person could be, tended daily by three of her children, supported financially by the other two and notably by Henry. At the beginning of the Faridpur period Annette's accounts for Henry were still showing a heavy burden of contribution to "Durham"; that is to say, the household in Torryburn of his mother Jemima, his brother David, and his two sisters Maggie and Phemie; the payment of about Rs. 320 to "Durham" every

### *India Called Them*

other month with the rupee at 1s. 7d. was equivalent to £150 a year.

In the spring of 1885 the Durham household was broken up, for Jemima came to an end on March 1st, more than half-way through her 90th year. Her old crony Jane Howison, companion of the visit to New Lanark sixty years before and grandmother of Jeanie, had died less than a year before in her 91st year.

Till her last week, David reported to Henry, Jemima appeared so full of life and spirits that he "never doubted she might live to a hundred." In that last week David read to her as usual the Old and New Testament, Quentin Durward, a sermon of her dead son-in-law Stephen Bell; friends came in to see her. Her doctor son Allie was summoned as her weakness grew and in her last days she was surrounded and tended wholly by four of her five children; only Henry in India could not be there. Jemima ended at last without illness or pain, with hardly a struggle.

I cannot believe yet that she is gone when I look at her empty chair, with the little bracket above on the wall where lie her Greek Testament and Thomas à Kempis, and think that the door is to open and she is to come in from her bedroom leaning on her stick and moving with some difficulty to her seat.

So wrote David, her eldest, to Henry, her youngest, in India.

The end of Jemima broke up the household that had centred round her. Maggie at first thought that she would continue to look after Phemie, but Phemie had other ideas. She established herself with her owls in a cottage of her own at Crombie Point on the Fife Coast of the Firth of Forth; there Annette found her in the following year, in her first happy independence, "*glued* to her birds" as Maggie said. David went off to London to live in lodgings at Islington and haunt the libraries. Maggie made this possible for him by giving up to him her share of all that Jemima left of her former fortune, and wrote to tell Henry why she had done this:

26/3/85.

I am thinking of you constantly and am so glad to think that dear Annette is beside you. . . . Our dear mother had been so bright and vigorous all winter we little thought she was so soon to be taken from us. Her loss makes an *awful blank* far more than I could ever

### *Faridpur Victory*

have imagined. She was so full of life and *individuality*, her presence seemed to pervade the whole house. My work in this world indeed now seems over. *Phemie* however still remains, and as long as my strength lasts, it will please God, be spent for her. . . . She is very quiet and easy to manage at present, and I do not now ever apprehend any difficulty with her.

Dear Henry, I think it right to tell you how things stand as to that weary-world subject money. Mamma left David The Mains of course which will be I think £30 a year to him after taxes etc. are paid. She also left him a third of what money was lying in the bank (£500) and to *Phemie* and me the rest of this money and the rent of the Coal yearly, about I think £80 a year. I have made over the whole of my share to David.

I do not require any more than what dear Stephen left me (£60 a year, 50 of which I give to the house as board and 10 I keep to dress me etc.) The reason I gave David this, dear Henry, was that I thought he would feel then *independent* and that of his own free will he would say to you that he would no longer require your most kind allowance.

*I do not know* if he will do this. I have only thought it my duty to give you this plain statement. Oh, if we could do without being a burden on you and Allie, how glad I should be! But God's will be done in this as in all things.

I do not wish any wish of mine personally. I only wish to do my duty. I fear this is like preaching—oh forgive it. I am only writing my very thoughts as they come up. I *feel* I can do this to you and to you only of the family, dear Henry.

For herself, with her £60 a year, Maggie took lodgings within reach of *Phemie* in Torryburn and prepared herself for "the queer outlandish dullness of living alone." But she was not allowed to have much experience of that; her loving selflessness made her indispensable to her friends. When she was in her lodgings they came to see her in droves. Whenever they met her on the road they seized on her to visit them. Recurrently one or other of them in trouble demanded her companionship, in Durham itself, in the old Inzievar, in many another home. "My mission," she wrote to Henry, "seems at present to keep deserted women company. I seem fated to act the part of ghost about all our old homes."

Even *Phemie*, who in the last weeks of being tied to Maggie after *Jemima's* death had refused to speak to her, became friendly



### *India Called Them*

as soon as she was free. "It is such a mercy," wrote Maggie, "that Phemie allows me to go to see her." She sold turkey eggs to Maggie and bantam eggs at the same price, "which secretly makes me open my eyes. However it is such an enjoyment to her this egg traffic that I do not grudge it."

So Durham was broken up for good: here was "an end of these fine folk." Here, too, was an end of the £150 a year which Durham had been costing Henry. But not, of course, an end of Henry's help to his kin. He still allowed David. He found or made excuses continually for sending a £5 note to one or other sister. And Annette backed him with gifts in kind: her regular "afternoon tea box" from India to Maggie furnished the material of many a cheerful feast.

The Government no doubt felt that they had treated Henry a little shabbily in sending him to Faridpur. Within a few months they offered him another more interesting district—Murshidabad—but he was too happily settled to move and he declined the offer. Just after this offer and its refusal came news of what Henry always regarded as one of the high spots of his official career. In Rangpur he had tried and decided a case of disputed succession to a very large estate—the Jalpaiguri Raj. His decision had been reversed by the High Court. Now the Privy Council reversed the decision of the High Court, and after six years decided that Henry had been right all the time. About this time Annette started entering good news in her diary under the symbol "S.G."; that is, subjects of gratulation. Receipt of the report of the Privy Council decision figured here, with "a row of sunflowers in bloom," with "good news from the bairns," with the discovery of "some maunds of coal left in a go-down" so that she could have a fire. She started also at this time entering "pros" of good news and "cons," chiefly deaths of friends, but the "cons" so soon outran the "pros" numerically that she gave up this game. Qualitatively the "pro" of Henry outbalanced all the "cons."

When Henry had been all but a year at Faridpur the Government opened the door of return to Calcutta, as Additional District and Sessions Judge for the 24 Pergunnahs. This offer came just after the birth of Herman. Henry wanted to be near the Calcutta libraries for his work on Nanda Kumar. He accepted

### *Faridpur Victory*

and the household prepared for another major move. The servants did so with delight. Bogmonia the ayah had already, in accord with a vow made beforehand, feasted fifty-six poor people in the police lines to celebrate the coming of Herman. Now Bogmonia and the rest attributed to baby the good luck of leaving the fish diet of Faridpur.

Hurree says he is very tired of fish and shall not eat any for long after we leave this place where he cannot get anything else to make curry. Bogmonia says that people here eat so much fish that even the clean clothes smell of it! It is true that all our starched clothes have a very curious smell, but I think it is from some curious starch and not from the fish.

It might be good luck to leave Faridpur, but the journey to Calcutta at the beginning of December proved a terrific undertaking. On the days before starting sixty-two boxes and a piano were sent off by boat and a very pleasant and complimentary farewell was given to Henry by the Faridpur native society. Then at 2 p.m. on December 1st Henry, Annette and 2-month-old Herman left Faridpur in palkis; two-and-a-half days later they reached the Great Eastern Hotel in Calcutta. Annette's diary records the process:

At the ferry found the man had run away and our luggage had gone round to Teprakandi by boat. Also Bogmonia! Steamer came  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour too soon. We could have caught it but did not like to leave ayah who was ill. Were planted on the chur and spent the night at the Tehsildar's cutcherry on taktaposhes! and a few sandwiches with rice boiled in milk. Herman quite happy. Next day a chuprassy made us a curry! At 2 p.m. went to the ghaut. By steamer to Goalundo thence by train to Calcutta where we arrived three hours late owing to an accident. We had no chota hazri as the E.B. Ry does not provide any. To G.E. Hotel fagged to death.

H.B. nevertheless went to look for houses.

Henry, Annette and Herman had reached Calcutta with the business of house-hunting still to be done. Their sixty-two boxes and piano would arrive as soon as the steamer completed the journey. Their faithful Judicial, a horse past work, was being marched down. Their retinue of servants, some fit, some ill,

### *India Called Them*

were scattered between Calcutta and Faridpur or moving to and fro. It was urgent that a house should be found at once.

After one day in the Great Eastern Hotel Annette had so far recovered that she was able to go out early with Henry and reject two houses found by him. Undeterred he sallied out again after breakfast, and in the evening was able to lead her to a house that seemed possible, 17, Lower Circular Road, Ballygunge. The house proved later to be a fever-trap, but it was a house and Henry and Annette found themselves at last together in Calcutta.

Henry and Annette both looked back at their year at Faridpur as one of the happiest of their lives. "I remember how good you were to me in Faridpur," wrote Henry in one of his love letters three years later. "Why is it that I miss you so much more this time than in 1884? Is it that I got to love you more at Faridpur and that every year makes me more and more unwilling to be without you?" So Henry wrote in the separation in 1886 and Annette gave him the answer that in the intimate life of Faridpur, when they were alone, she had been able to show the love which had been growing stronger under the children's shadow.

It was a second honeymoon made out of unpromising materials. Annette later described the stay at Faridpur as a victory; she was a little hurt once when Henry did not seem to realize what the victory had cost her in determination to draw good from apparent evil. She wrote once from Darjeeling to Henry in Calcutta.

I have said many times that, spite of privations and sorrows of which we had many and spite of its dullness, my year at Faridpur was one of the happiest of my life. I have not forgotten your praise of me for the victory over Faridpur, but I can never say that I enjoyed the *place*. I was happy there with you but life was very hard outside this. I am sure I have said this to you before—I do not wish the laurels you gave me to be taken away now by your saying I did not fight for them.

The victory of Faridpur was made possible because, though Annette had by no means finished with India, she thought at the time that her trio of children had finished with it; the plan that she had outlined before going on furlough in 1883, of establishing them for five years at Mussoorie, had faded. The children's stay

### *Faridpur Victory*

in Southport was now in her mind a complete weaning from India.

But the time at Faridpur changed this again. It was a delight as well as a victory because it brought her into more continuous companionship of work and of play with Henry, and because it brought her a second son. Both these developments, as she soon realized, made a new complication in the problem of family life.

*We (excuse me dear) are so old that we may not see much of our children or they of us if we wait till our retirement.*

Henry from Calcutta to Annette in London,  
May 22, 1886.

*The darlings are very sweet but of course they are not their father.*

Annette from Epping Forest to Henry in Calcutta,  
July 20, 1886.

*I am to say that in selecting officers to fill the responsible position of judges of the Calcutta High Court, the Government of India is guided solely by public considerations, and the Governor-General in Council cannot admit that Mr. Beveridge has any valid ground of complaint in the matter.*

Government of India to Lieutenant-Governor of  
Bengal, July 5, 1886.

*Perhaps I do not think enough about feelings in others. I know I value some qualities more than tender-heartedness.*

Annette from Culross, Fife, to Henry in Calcutta,  
August 9, 1886.

*You know I am not really unsafe even as the driver of a dog-cart, though I may not inspire confidence.*

Henry from Calcutta to Annette in London,  
September 11, 1886.

*Akbar is my refuge.*

Annette on journey home to Henry in Calcutta.  
March 28, 1886.

## Chapter XV

### THE FAMILY IS UNITED

**I**N the spring of 1885, after declaring in Latin that she could not decide, Annette had decided to stay in India and have her fourth child there under Henry's care. In the spring of 1886 there was no doubt that she must visit England. Annette's aurist had told her that the operation which had been postponed for two years before should not be postponed indefinitely. Annette's trio in Southport were growing weekly more clamorous to see her. The only question was as to what she should do about the new baby Herman. She decided that Herman should be left in India to keep Henry company, and she explained her reasons to the three darlings in Southport, writing a family letter to them about family matters, as if they were grown up. She told them that she was coming home to see them but that Papa must stay in India to get money to feed them and have them taught. She asked them to consider who could best stay with Papa to save him from feeling dull and lonely. She knew they would all be sorry not to see their little brother so soon as they expected, but ought they not to be pleased to give up something for their father who worked so hard for them? "If Herman stays here it will be better for him and better for Papa. The journey is very long for such a wee baby to take."

This was just the reasoning tone of Annette's own father to her when she was 11 and had feared to go to a dentist. She went on to give the trio an account of their new brother:

10/1/86.

Herman is very well. What he laughs most at is when we jump him up and down on his toes, in our laps. He is very ambitious about standing and walking and seems to forget how small he is. He imitates what he hears; when we say "ah!" he says it too; when we say "ugh" he says it; when Bogmonia squeals to him he makes such sharp noises that I think he is crying. He is now fed from a soda-water bottle because so many proper baby's bottles were broken that ayah said we would not throw any more rupees away on him! Everyone

### *India Called Them*

says he is just like his mother and I think he is just like you all were at his age.

So 6-month-old Herman was left in India, and on March 21, 1886, Annette sailed from Calcutta in the *Ballarat*. She was escorting a friend, Miss Murray, so graceful as to earn the sobriquet of "The Madonna," and she found many interesting and friendly passengers, including the distinguished journalist George Augustus Sala, who copied out poems by Andrew Marvell for her. She was anything but alone. She was also anything but content as she travelled home.

28/3/86.

Spite of its fronded palms I regret to see Ceylon. I do not know . . . why all the regrets of our riven home should be more poignant here than anywhere else. However, my darling, I think how rich I really am in you and our children and I try to keep on with what scant courage I possess. Akbar is my refuge! . . .

I imagine I ought to be satisfied for I have friendliness but you know I am grasping in some ways. I want *my own* at times with a longing I can only still by work.

She found even less reason for content in England. Travelling overland from Marseilles, she met the trio and their Fräulein Vogel, not at Bingfield in Southport but with their adopted uncle and aunt the Turners near Stockport. That was a delight, but for Annette it proved an awakening from a fool's paradise. The management of the ideal home found for the children with a friend at Stockport had proved to be better in intention than in practice. Fräulein was "very low-spirited and declining to return to Southport." Next day Letty said that she did not like Bingfield; "it would be nice if Miss L. were away." Next day Sonnie weighed in and "announced his sentiments about not returning to Bingfield." The darlings were "all very incisive in their remarks and opinions." Wherever else they went they would not, if they could help it, go back to Bingfield. They carried their first point and did not do so.

Where they should go was settled by two letters, written independently at practically the same moment in the same sense in Calcutta and in London.



*Jemima at 88*





## *The Family is United*

17, Ballygunge Circular Road, 16 May, 1886.

Your reunion with the children must have been charming. Bogmonia says you had better bring them all out. Don't you think it would be a good plan? With the falling rupee a house and a governess at Mussoorie or Darjeeling would be a saving.

28, Regent's Park Road, 15-19th May, 1886.

Last night your dear letter came. I cannot help having a heart-ache when one of yours comes. It is such a sorry substitute although so very welcome and so comforting. Dearest husband, I had an inspiration last night, I think it must be so called because it solves so many hard problems. I see you separated from your children and deprived of their charm. I see anxiety and the torture of parting before them and me. Letty feels it very much and so do the others, I think. They do not however dwell on it as she does. Our plans have gone agait and others must be made. I sat by the fire last night with Kumad and your letter came and when I had read your words that the snow and rain were too much for the babes in England and when he said "Take the little children, they are really too small to be left at home without their mother," it shot through me that I would give ourselves the happiness of having them with us and unsay my declared resolution that I would never take them back. It is not a foolish dream I know for these reasons:—(our first care is of course for them). They have been at home three years and are strong and well. They could I believe remain in Calcutta three months without hurt and spend the rest of the year in Darjeeling. There are difficulties but these are everywhere. I think they could stay out some three years without harm to education if I had a good governess with Fräulein. I think too that we could have furlough. At any rate, you would have them and they would learn to know you and would be within easy reach of you and me. We could spend all the holidays with them.

There is no need to invoke telepathy as the explanation of this simultaneous idea in Calcutta and in London. It was the natural result of the same considerations working on two minds that had grown close together. But neither of the two could be certain how the idea would be received at the other end of the line of communication. Each adopted, therefore, the same device of fathering the idea on an Indian friend—Henry on the ayah Bogmonia, Annette on Henry's protégé Kumad.

Of the two Henry was the least certain of his reception; the children, after all, were in Annette's sphere of decision. He

### *India Called Them*

advanced to his objective by cunning parallels. He had prepared the way to his letter of May 16th by earlier letters: "Life is too long for such separations and we have nothing after it perhaps." (Apr. 20). "I miss you dreadfully and shall begin soon to count the days till you return. . . . I am afraid there is too much snow and rain for the children in England." (Apr. 26). This was the letter which Annette had just received when she wrote hers of May 19th.

And even when Henry had admitted authorship of his plan, he continued to be laboriously persuasive.

22/5/86.

My idea is that you might bring them out to India for a year. . . . We (excuse me dear) are so old that we may not see much of our children or they of us, if we wait till our retirement.

Annette went forward with more confidence. Though she asked for Henry's opinion, she did not wait for it. She had no doubt what he would say even when she first broached her plan.

19/5/86.

Fancy the scene when we all alight at the door of 17, Ballygunge C.R. I do not wish you to order any furniture. Please leave all that to me. (I conclude that you will approve of my scheme you see.)

Two days after her first inspiration Annette wrote that she would bring out all the children, unless Henry forbade. Five days later, before she had heard from Henry, she telegraphed, as she said, two pieces of good news to cheer him:

Operation well over. Children accompany me.

Henry answered:

Delighted approve two teeth.

Letty, now grown to critical 9, thought that Annette's telegram could have been shortened by a word to "Children Coming," but Annette thought that Letty's alternative might be misleading. In happy married life, as she admitted to Henry with wifely impropriety, children are always on the way; she reassured him that only the three he knew of would be accompanying her from England.

### *The Family is United*

The "two teeth" of Henry's telegram were Herman's, for which Bogmonia demanded and received a bakshish. The delight and approval were for the coming of the children rather than for the operation. Henry did not altogether believe in "your Dr. Woakes." He did not think that indefatigable gentleman should be allowed to operate without a consultation; Annette had promised to ask for a consultation but she forgot the promise and Mr. Woakes had his way. He caused great pain which Annette bore with her usual fortitude. Whether or not the operation prevented some major evil, it did not make any improvement in Annette's hearing. In 1884 she had said how hard it was for the darlings to seek an audience with their mother. By 1886 she was beginning to find it difficult to hear what they said; in Calcutta in February of that year at a party she had felt her deafness extremely.

One of the decisive factors in Annette's decision—it was her decision ratified by Henry—was Letty.

19/5/86.

Letty does want her mother! She is a darling but she has sad moods as tonight when she told me she was afraid something was going to happen. . . . I see she cannot speak or think of my going without tears. . . .

21/5/86.

Letty has been terribly excited tonight full of terrors about a ghost. . . . I know the agonies of childish terrors with no mother. She says she can tell me everything. When I was her age I used to go creeping in the night to my father's bed. He was very good to me.

Just before this, in a visit to the dentist, Annette had renewed in her daughter another of her own childish experiences, recorded in her earliest letter from her father.

5/5/86.

Yesterday I took Letty to Mr. Tomes and she went pale as paper and did not have her teeth out. Mr. T. scolded her and told her to go out of the room. . . . He thinks that shame will take her back in a better frame of mind next time. I told her the story of my own failure at her age and I am wondering if she has the virtue as well as the failing of her mother and whether, as she refused to have the tooth out, she will now go of her own accord to have it done.

### *India Called Them*

The determination of the children to be with their mother was the main factor in the great decision for reunion in India. The obscure working of general economic forces was an assisting cause. When Henry first went to India in 1858 the rupee was worth 2/- and it was hardly less when Annette went there in 1872: at 2/- to the rupee Henry's Calcutta salary of 2,200 rupees a month would have represented £2,640 a year in England. But the rupee was based on silver and the £ on gold; the depreciation of silver in terms of gold which began in the 'seventies changed disastrously the value of their income for those in India who had to make payments in England. By 1886, the rupee was worth not 2/- but 1/6 and the fall continued. At one time it was worth little more than 1/-; finally, after Henry and Annette had left India for good, it was established at 1/4. In 1886, therefore, Henry's Calcutta salary represented not £2,640 but under £2,000; every pound that he spent on schooling in England cost him not 10 rupees but 13½ rupees. But the salary had still its full value in India; the economic argument reinforced the human argument for uniting the family in Calcutta.

The decision to reunite the family was taken in May 1886. The actual reunion was postponed. Annette had to go through a long and painful course of treatment, including an operation, on nose and ears. The children's journey to India could not be undertaken before the cold weather began. The interval she spent mainly in London to be within reach of Mr. Woakes, with her stepmother's house, 28, Regent's Park Road, as her normal base.

Mr. Woakes, next to the children, became her principal occupation. A subsidiary occupation was Akbar. And this proved at times a penance equal to Mr. Woakes. Annette found that much more was involved than a simple translation from German into English of what had been written by the Count of Noer. The Count had died with his work unfinished. As he lay dying, he had cried, "Oh my book, my poor book!"; his wife, the Countess, had answered: "Be at ease! I promise you I will have it published." To redeem this promise she had employed a Dr. Buchwald to finish the work; Annette came to think very badly of Dr. Buchwald. "Akbar," she wrote in May, "is provok-

### *The Family is United*

ing to a degree . . . I would not have undertaken it if I had known there would be so many errors."

A little later:

I have roughly finished the chapter on "Akbar and his Court" and am in despair. I will make a list of the errors I have found.

Two months later, in July:

I find my visit to England rather penitential than otherwise. The doctor is a dreadful nuisance—still it has to be got through. Then Akbar seems interminable and Buchwald is disheartening to a degree.

With all this, Annette found time for many outings. She made excursions with the children to Epping Forest, to the Turners' house near Stockport, and to Noer in Schleswig-Holstein. She made a solitary pilgrimage to Scotland and in an incredibly short space of time saw practically all Henry's relations. She went to Jemima's old home at Torryburn and settled what to do about the possessions which Henry had inherited from Jemima, lying there in packing-cases.

9/8/86.

I took a magnificent resolution—to despatch them as they are to India and so save a packing.

On the way up to Scotland, at York, she not merely engaged a governess, as related below, but saw the parents-in-law of her half-sister Kate. She renewed contact with innumerable friends. Her energy was inexhaustible.

At York, spending some Sunday hours quietly in the Minster, she even, in Henry's best vein, found time for self-criticism:

I thought over many points of conduct in which I have been wrong and I wondered how I could so often have given pain, rather than give up what seemed intellectually right. Perhaps I do not think enough about feelings in others. I know that I value some qualities more than tender-heartedness.

There has come over me a terror of being what I so dislike in Fanny. I feel a despair lest I should be like her without knowing.

With this sister Fanny, Annette's relations were at the moment emerging from winter to a slow and very uncertain spring. James Mowatt, two years before, had insisted on resigning

### *India Called Them*

his trusteeship of Annette's marriage settlement, putting her to considerable needless expense. But now there came the beginning of a reconciliation.

28, Regent's Park Road, 20/6/86.

The stately approach to a meeting with Fanny Mowatt goes on like a siege by regular steps. On Monday fortnight a card brought by a servant from her. A week later a note of acknowledgement from me. Then a note from her. A week later a call from Osmond and on the same day the gift of Herman's photograph to him and his house in general which called forth the letter I enclose. I shall not call first but I fear there is one fact clear from this long delay that, however much I may wish to heal the sore, we are not missing one another's society.

The fresh sore of this particular season was a dispute about Stourbridge furniture between Fanny and Mrs. Akroyd. Into this Annette did her best to refuse to be drawn, but she could not escape altogether, and the furniture dispute led to other disagreements. Her diary records laconically "painful scene in a cab on my introducing the question of my seeing the Akroyd account book." Henry got many pages of detailed record of this affair.

26/9/86.

I am just sick of this discussion about furniture. . . . I refuse to have Mrs. A. made uncomfortable by my means. . . . I am ready to sweep into Lethe—have done so—all I may have disliked in her actions. Things were too strong. Even if not, many years have passed and time is merciful. Besides I am indebted to her for much kindness and she is 68 and is my father's widow and the questions at issue are trumpery. . . . I am sure I have said all this before and that you have approved but I want you to approve again.

But not all Annette's relations with Fanny were contentious. Every now and again she saw Fanny and James, not about furniture, but for friendship. One such occasion was just after James had stood unsuccessfully for Parliament in the Home Rule election of 1886.

James was a Liberal—he had feasted Henry once at the Reform Club—who went over with Chamberlain. On the day that the Home Rule Bill was defeated he gave a day's wages to each of the fifty workmen who were building his new house on

### *The Family is United*

Hindhead, and celebrated the occasion with a bonfire. He went on to spend £500 in fighting a Home Ruler at Carmarthen. He was defeated, of course. "I would rather have had James' £500," wrote Henry, "than his 2,177 votes." And Annette did not agree with James' politics. Ultimately she went over wholly to the Conservatives, but at this stage she agreed with Gladstone: "I cannot think why Chamberlain is so pernicky."

Annette's main interest was not in politics or relations or friends, but in her trio of children, aged now 9, 7 plus and 6 minus. It is to be hoped that Henry was as much interested, for he was doomed to hear a great deal about them. Annette wrote to him interminable screeds about the darlings—their health and behaviour, their religious opinions and speculations as to the origin of the world, their shopping and their visits to the Zoo, their occasional misfortunes. Willie fell and cut himself rather badly one day while running full speed down Primrose Hill to some remote objective; as Annette wrote, he himself volunteered the explanation:

Willie is the least practical of the three in sense of observation—that is, he is so taken up with what he is thinking of that, as he himself thoughtfully remarked one day when he tumbled, he cannot think of two things at once.

Above all, Annette wrote about the cleverness of the children and the problem of filling their minds with education:

5/5/86.

Letty is reading a translation of Virgil—Dryden's. She found it herself and says she likes it. Miss Lewin says that they are really clever children. She told me a tale of Sonnie. He had been away from the geography lessons for some time with a cold and had got behind. She said on his rejoining that he would have to miss some part of the book in consequence as he would not be able to make it up. "May I take the book upstairs?" Next day he appeared with all learned. She says that the geography boys say, "Oh! Willie doesn't count," because he is so much quicker than the others. . . . I think Fräulein has done extremely well with them. Tutu reads extremely well with the boldest attack on German pronunciation. . . . She is amusing herself by copying a poem from a German book. Willie is studying a ditto, and Letty has her Dryden. Tutu is now declaiming what she has written.



### *India Called Them*

After swallowing Dryden "with great gulps" Letty discovered a Don Quixote illustrated by Doré. Willie partly followed her there, and partly diverged to arithmetic. "Oh that dear little L.C.M."—so he came in shouting with ravishment once to his mother and had to explain that his love was the Least Common Multiple. Forty years on, the same Willie, on the platform of a London Underground station, heard a similar avowal of passion in another field of studies. "Oh, I do love Quasi-Rent," cried an ardent economist maiden to her swain as, all unknowingly, she passed the Director of the London School of Economics and Political Science.

The children were growing beyond Fräulein Emma Vogel for anything but German, and that they spoke and wrote already as fluently as English. Annette extemporized governesses for them and as a rule with good results. Of one Miss Baylee, who taught them Latin during an excursion to Epping Forest, Annette recorded that she "is another illustration of the folly of taking more than reasonable pains about people to serve one. She was the first applicant and having good chits I took her and so far she is perfectly satisfactory." Annette even thought of taking this particular governess out to India, but she proved to have missionary tendencies and so would not do for Henry's children. "It would be impossible for her as a resident governess not to wish to teach her creed to the children."

So later, hearing of a governess at York, Annette, on her way to see Henry's relations in Scotland, stopped off at York and saw and engaged her. Miss Close also had risks in Henry's eyes, for she was young and pretty. He warned Annette:

3/9/86.

You are a courageous woman bringing a young and pretty governess to India, but I have full faith in all you do.

Annette had faith in herself and also, in spite of past disappointments, in Miss Close:

29/9/86.

Women are not all like some we have known and if this young lady should engage herself I would arrange for her to see her fiancé and the worst that could happen would be a long engagement under my chaperonage. She will not easily make acquaintances, except through me, please remember!

### *The Family is United*

The firmness of Miss Close's behaviour and the strength of Annette's chaperonage were never put to the test, for at the last moment before sailing the young lady fell ill and had to be left behind. Annette found herself with the educational problem still to solve when she reached India. But she was not without help in looking after the children. Another young lady not quite so dangerous, "Hetty Dendy 28, staid and handsome," coming from a family of Unitarian friends of Annette's asked to be allowed to go with her, and did so. Annette never lacked for friends.

While Annette was wrestling with Mr. Woakes, Akbar, and the problems of education in England, the official fate of Henry was being decided in India. The year 1886 saw the practical ending, after twenty-eight years' service, of his hopes of promotion to the High Court. Two appointments announced in February involved passing him over in favour of much junior men. Henry, in Annette's words, having according to his wont, "let the matter 'wobble' in the right place for some time and perhaps stirred to it by the advice of several friends," at first tried to see or write to the retiring Chief Justice, Sir Richard Garth, but the latter declined to enter into any discussion. He then had an interview with the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir Rivers Thompson, and had what Annette in her record of the proceedings described as a surprising conversation. "H.B. who had gone to hear about his own delinquencies heard only what may be called a gossip," about the oddities or misbehaviour of others; the Lieutenant-Governor was obviously anxious to talk about everything rather than about what was wrong with Henry. So, taking his time, Henry composed a letter of protest to the Lieutenant-Governor and asked for it to be forwarded to the Viceroy. The letter of protest went on April 5th and the Government's answer was dated July 5th. Henry, in writing to Annette in England, had forecast the time with exactness. Allowing a month to get round each of the three angles of Government—Simla, Darjeeling, Calcutta—he gave three months for a reply.

The letter of protest was a moderate reasoned statement by Henry of his services and of the absence of any complaint against him. It was typical Henry in two respects: of literary allusion and

### *India Called Them*

of racial attitude. Henry compared the Privy Council which had supported him and overruled the High Court on the Jalpaiguri Succession case to the Greek Amphictyonic Council, introducing this topic by a quotation from Matthew Arnold. In a concluding paragraph Henry declared that if a native had been appointed he would not have said a word:

I am one of those who would like to see more natives in the High Court and who would have rejoiced if one of that hard-working and meritorious class of men, the Subordinate Judges, had been appointed. But I do not think I should keep silent when a junior member of my own service is promoted so much out of his turn.

Annette, when she saw this, commented: "Probably the last paragraph is not politic but it is true and it is truly Beveridgian."

The answer from the Government of India, signed by Sir Anthony McDonnell with whom Henry remained always on terms of friendship, was what might have been expected.

I am to say that in selecting officers to fill the responsible position of Judges of the Calcutta High Court, the Government of India is guided solely by public considerations, and the Governor-General in Council cannot admit that Mr. Beveridge has any valid ground for complaint in the matter. I am to request that with the permission of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, Mr. Beveridge may be informed accordingly.

Henry's reaction—and Annette's—were also what might have been foretold. Henry took the rejection of his protest with complete philosophy. His first letter to Annette after receipt of the Government's reply did not mention the reply but was full of Annette.

24/7/86.

I am very sorry for you with all your troubles, your strychnine poisoning, your Dr. Woakes and your Akbar. But patience, my dear, will carry us through it all and we shall meet at last and be happy. I count the days and drag on with a broken wing until I see you again. . . . The candle shade has just arrived. You take too much thought about me, my darling. Many thanks, I will use it, but I do not get up now before day-light.

The next letter did mention the reply, and a later one contained

### *The Family is United*

a few sarcastic references to its claim of "public considerations" as the sole guide to some of the appointments made in the past. But Henry's mind was seldom in that key:

29/7/86.

I hope that the G.G.'s reply won't cast you down and indeed I am sure that it will not. It has affected me very little. The Bengalees have a word called *biroherenal* or the fire of separation to express the feelings of a wife when separated from her husband. I think I feel that at being separated from my wife and we have that noble Virgilian line: *Superanda omnis fortuna ferendo est*. I am not sure of the order of the words. . . .

Why is it that I miss you so much more this time than in 1884? Is it that I got to love you more at Faridpur and that every year makes me more and more unwilling to be without you?

Annette's answer came from Noer in Schleswig-Holstein on August 23rd.

My dear Love

If I could think of any new name for you in which I could put more love I would do so. I have just had your letters of July 29th and through some admirable promptitude of Grindlay's I have them here on Monday.

You miss me more than in 1884! I think it is because of our intimate life in Faridpur. Then when we were alone you could see and I could show the love which had been growing stronger under the children's shadow. I would say too, if I could see you, something about a hope I have that I have a truer view of you and so you can love me more because I love you more. I could not have thought in 1884 that I could love you more but I now know it.

There is one thing I will say if you will let me and not be vexed. I could I believe never again set myself in such public opposition to you as once I did. I do not say I was wrong, because it is not exactly that I feel, but that I could not do it again.

The G.G.'s letter certainly does not depress me. It is much what I anticipated. . . . I do not feel anything about it—it seems not to touch me. You are what you are, and I know what that is and just now I am only longing you were here to enjoy with me what I really owe to you for finding me Noer and Akbar.

So the Governor-General was put in his small place in Henry and Annette's scheme of things. So ended Henry's hopes of

### *India Called Them*

rising to the top of his profession, that last step and rounding off of his career, on which two years before from England Annette had laid such stress, and which would have eased greatly her problems, both of finance and of companionship. The High Court, in addition to dignity, would have meant more pay and longer holidays. Henry was to end his service seven years later in the same rank of District and Sessions Judge as that to which he had been appointed eleven years before, at the time when he married Annette.

"I shall always be thought an unsafe man," he had written to her then. And he did not increase his reputation for safety by what he now wrote on the trial and execution of Nanda Kumar in the time of Warren Hastings. This was an ancient controversy, but it roused racial feelings. Henry's attack on the justice of the condemnation, published in two articles in the *Calcutta Review* in January and April 1886, drew a vigorous reply from Sir James FitzJames Stephen. Henry, undeterred, proceeded to make his articles into his second book published in 1886 on the *Trial of Nanda Kumar: A Narrative of a Judicial Murder*. The book is not easy reading, with the wood perhaps at times getting a little lost in the trees. Exactly what Nanda Kumar did may well be disputed. But the gist of the matter is that an Indian was not only condemned but executed in India for a crime of forgery, capital in England at that time but little more than a normal practice of litigation in India, both at that time and long after. This happened to him after he had become the enemy instead of the friend of the Governor-General, Warren Hastings.

But Henry, though he had an instinct to swim upstream, did not always want to be thought an unsafe man. Writing to Annette about work that he was doing for the Royal Asiatic Society, he disclaimed all desire to be a new broom there.

11/9/86.

Gradually I may get influence if I am thought to be a safe man. You know I am not really unsafe, even as the driver of a dog-cart, though I may not inspire confidence.

While Henry's official future was being settled in India, Annette had decided to visit Noer, in pursuance of her work on Akbar. It seemed that a visit to see the Countess might help to

### *The Family is United*

get things straight. And it would be a new experience: Annette was always avid of experience. The Countess also had courage, in inviting a total stranger of another nation with three children and their governess to pay a visit with no fixed limits of time. When Henry raised the question of cost of the journey, Annette answered: "I must tell you dear that the journey will really be less expensive than my coming alone and leaving Fräulein and the children in lodgings." The tickets both ways for the party of five between London and Noer came to less than £14. So on August 17th the whole five set out for Noer by way of Hamburg; by September 10th they were back in London, coming by sea all the way from Kiel.

Noer, though called a Schloss, was and is a large white house, looking through woods and across fields on the sea about ten miles north-west of Kiel.

20/8/86.

The grounds are entered by a simple gate—no lodge—and a short drive brings one to the front of a long plain high-roofed white house. The door flew open and out ran the Countess followed by her daughters and a governess.

The rooms have no splendour—quite the reverse—but there is every sign of a personal thoughtfulness which is indeed very touching to me when I consider what our relations are. Two dear little cots—a low children's table with a Noah's Ark and three small chairs and toys and miniature toilette arrangements—then when our luggage had not come, three little nightdresses with feeders which were all laid in a drawer in readiness. Indeed she is a woman worth taking pains over. . . .

25-29/8/86.

This is an extraordinary house. It makes terrible creakings and sounds of various descriptions. . . . We lock our doors to keep ourselves from getting *creepy*! All the servants sleep under the living rooms and the C. says that she has at times had them refuse to go and shut the shutters at night. . . . She has a story of an apparition of a man in the Count's room three years before his death! and is apparently convinced that there is some connection between the occurrences. . . .

I like the Countess very much but she is not at all bookish as I had expected. . . . She used to drive about with her husband in the carriage we use and the Count used to shoot from the carriage—the

### *India Called Them*

horses having been trained to stand fire. . . . She paints, and tells me how when the C. worked in the library and she in her room, they used to be impelled to see how each was getting on and used to take different ways and miss one another.

The expedition to Schleswig-Holstein was a great success from the point of Annette's children. They received an impression of woodlands by the sea which made that scenery always seem familiar to them; they found friendly elder sisters in the Countess' two daughters; they saw the great Viking boat at Kiel; Willie began digging a canal some twenty years before the Kaiser Wilhelm.

The expedition was a success also from the point of view of Annette. Two professors were summoned to Noer to be given a catalogue of errors. The revision of the Count's work in German by Dr. Buchwald was ended. The Countess retrieved the Count's MS. from him and stopped the printing. That, at least, was Annette's understanding. "Akbar will come through now that my hands are free." "I think worse and worse of Buchwald."

Henry contrived to be both charitable to Buchwald and in agreement with Annette:

27/9/86.

It is just possible that the Countess has not paid Buchwald enough. . . . She should have looked on the book as her husband's child and have provided for it. Alas! why did he not marry a bookish woman? But indeed such are rare in Germany. We two shall go quietly to work, and make a good book of it. It is now our child. And we will say as little as possible about Buchwald, who perhaps is a struggling literateur and badly paid.

Only from Emma Vogel's point of view was the Noer party a misfortune. She proved to be the poorest of sailors. Annette found her useless on the way to Hamburg and worse than that on the way back from Kiel. She decided there and then that Fräulein should not come to India; after all, it would be possible to find suitable Fräuleins there. This was a hope which Annette was driven in India to abandon.

As the time for meeting again drew near, the exchange between England and India grew more loving.

## *The Family is United*

5/8/86, from Epping Forest.

My dearest—burn this up and I will tell you that I hate the hemisphere between us, that I love you better every month, that I think myself blessed among women to be your wife. . . .

Henry declined to burn this letter. “No, no, I like it too much,” he said, and answered:

11/9/86, from Ballygunge.

My dearest,

I am not surprised that Dr. Woakes admires you. So do I and many people besides. . . .

I should like to have married you when I first came out. Why did we not meet? I should have had so many years of happiness with you. . . .

I am getting the house ready for you, e.g. I have put some water-lilies in the tank.

12/9/86.

My dearest darling,

I have a holiday today owing to Mr. Stevens having kindly pointed out to me that I am allowed a day's joining time in order to make the descent from the upper to the lower story of the court house with proper judicial gravity. . . . I think I shall employ it in writing, no in printing a Beveridgian letter to the light of my soul. I see I am smudging badly but I cannot help it. It is a fit type for a mourning husband and he is a weeping one, for the tears of perspiration are flowing from my brow. . . .

This last letter was one of Henry's first efforts on the typewriter—a machine which, like all other machines, defeated Henry more often than he mastered it. When he bought a tricycle, as he did about this time, he “made a dreadful mess of it at first, went backwards instead of forwards.” When Annette sent him an eyeglass with a special attachment, he thanked her but said he had not yet mastered its use. The typewriter was constantly in the doctor's hands. The one thing to be said for it was that the children found his typed letters on balance easier to read than his written ones. Annette sometimes found them too easy to read even from a distance—too public in their declarations of his love.

There were, of course, differences of opinion between them.



### *India Called Them*

When Henry said that he had been making good resolutions about himself, Annette wished to know please "what my husband has done that he needs good resolutions made over him?"

I am perfectly contented with him when his hair is parted and his frock coat buttoned underneath and his locks shorn and I shall approve of no resolutions which change him.

There was naturally an argument about how Annette should travel out. Henry loved planning journeys for others. He thought not unreasonably that, with her tail of children and governesses, Annette would do best to board a ship in England and stay on it without changing till she reached Calcutta. Annette had other views. She was a born traveller but hated a long sea voyage. She exploded Henry's fallacy that the sea was good for her:

28/7/86.

Foolish as I am in many ways there are some in which I am open to experience and this is one. I cannot call to mind any voyage I ever made which did not leave me worse than I was at starting.

On the other hand, she did not mind getting into and out of trains, however many children she had with her, and she enjoyed turning journeys into sight-seeing tours. At one time she thought of travelling out to India by way of Schleswig-Holstein, taking train from there across Europe to Genoa or Marseilles with all her belongings. In the end she threw in the journey to and from Noer with all her retinue as an extra. She went there and back and started afresh from London. But she insisted on Genoa and the economical Rubattino Line for the journey out. She did not go even to Genoa direct; she stopped off at Lucerne for a night and day of sight-seeing. Henry doubted if the Rubattino would be clean enough for Annette, or the stewards sufficiently respectful. But after argument he submitted:

11/9/86.

I am sorry that I hurt you by anything I said, but am glad that you have told me. You know that I never mean to do so, but when one follows one's own way and very rightly too, he or she must expect to be judged, and even sometimes to be disapproved of. I have no doubt that your Rubattino expedition will be a success. I have full confidence in your powers of managing. . . .

### *The Family is United*

This confidence was justified. Annette triumphed over everything—stravaiged over Europe with her retinue; crossed the sea from Genoa to Bombay; crossed India by train, stopping off at Bankipur (one episode of this was a wholly unexpected change at midnight at Allahabad); in the last week of November threw herself and the children into Henry's arms in Calcutta; and regained her baby Herman.

It was a great occasion. The family of six was for the first time together. Reunion reached its climax a few weeks later, when on Annette's 44th birthday Henry gave her a present of diamond earrings, when the elder children each gave something of their own work, when the baby, having been upset by an unexpected change of cow, grew all right by the evening.

*Our dear children are, I am thankful to say, not juvenile Mills.*

Annette from Arrah to Henry in Calcutta.  
February 2, 1887.

*Why make a Moloch of India more complete than she is? Do we not have to suffer for her as it is? And why should we bear a heavier cross than we do? Our separations are expiations enough for holding the country.*

Annette from Darjeeling to Henry in Calcutta,  
May 8, 1888.

*It has just struck me why I feel so exhilarated by our rides: I forget my deafness—it is no impediment to efficiency and I am cheered to a most hoping degree.*

Annette from Darjeeling to Henry in Calcutta.  
June 26, 1888.

*We must go on working at our separate vocations.*

Henry from Calcutta to Annette in Darjeeling,  
April 29, 1889.

*I have been long sitting with Dr. Cobb and going through that cruel record of Herman's illness.*

Annette from Darjeeling to Henry in Calcutta,  
September 14, 1889.

*It would seem that Willie has got that horrid remittent fever. Everybody tells me it is time he should go home.*

Henry from Calcutta to Annette in Darjeeling,  
November 4, 1889.

## Chapter XVI

### LAST ROUNDS WITH INDIA

**I**N November 1886 Henry and Annette and their four children were for the first time together; they spread out joyfully into the Ballygunge house, with the old Zenana as nursery quarters; they laid the great earring-tobacco controversy to glorious rest. But India had another trick up her sleeve.

The new baby Herman, left in India to keep Henry company when Annette went to see the elder children in England, was a high-spirited, energetic, forward creature. As Annette had written about him in his fourth month to the trio, before she left him, Herman was very ambitious. She went on to quote the ayah Bogmonia.

18/1/86.

Herman has always his fingers in his mouth because he is *thinking* of cutting some teeth. It is very early and when I asked Bogmonia why her baby was beginning so early to think about teeth, she said that there never was such a child, that he wanted to sit up when he was a month old and to stand when he was three months old, and so, of course, he would cut his teeth too soon.

To Annette in England, Henry wrote about her baby when he was just short of a year.

27/9/86.

I am longing for you to see your Herman. He is so jolly. His great delight is to lean against a morah and so be pulled gently from room to room. His great ambition is to be a man standing with his eyes erect to heaven. When the ayah sings to him, he claps his little hands to the tune of Tai-Tai, Mama, Bari jai! He is very fond of the khansamah and makes signs to him all the time of breakfast and dinner. . . . He says lao apparently when he wants something brought to him.

Of course the baby had his childish upsets of teething, colic, and occasional fever. And at one stage Henry expressed to Annette the apprehension that Herman was an unduly excitable, restless

### *India Called Them*

child; "the ayah says he sleeps badly." To which Annette answered with calming common sense. "Nurses," she said, "always talk like that, and magnify the restlessness of the night; if he sleeps by day, that will be well enough."

All was well when Annette met her baby again. And on the last day of November, just short of 14 months, Herman achieved his first great ambition and took his first unassisted steps alone. Three weeks later the blow fell.

Ballygunge was a feverish place. On arrival in November Annette had found nearly all the servants down with fever. A week after the great celebration of Annette's birthday and the earrings, the baby was taken seriously ill. He had had some fever before then, but now his temperature mounted to critical heights. When for a moment the fever relaxed its grip, Annette rushed him away twelve hours by train to a non-malarial district and to a trusted doctor in Arrah near Bankipur. There the illness took a new turn, with bronchitis, unconsciousness for nearly ten days, paralysis for about as long, and when the paralysis passed a constant snatching of the baby's hand at the base of his skull as at some discomfort.

The doctor described it as a case without precedent. It was, as Annette wrote afterwards, a terrible illness to watch and she watched it all. She stayed by Herman day and night, with the bearer Ram Yad ("very useful and very managing with Herman") and with the ayah Bogmonia who vowed to give a feast to holy men when her baby should be well again. For many days there seemed no chance of this. But after a month hope came creeping back.

"You can guess how thankful I am feeling," wrote Annette to Henry on January 19th, "that there is hope we may be spared the anguish I have dreaded almost to this day. . . . He must have gone if care had failed him and all the luxuries your work has given him." Four days later, "he still knows none of us, and his right arm is still powerless. . . . One has to look back to what he was some weeks ago in order to keep up hope and be cheerful and calm." But Herman, in Annette's words, had the stuff of a staying man in him; in another three days "he has a charming colour. . . . I think Bogmonia will feed her faquirs yet and we shall all be happy together."

## *Last Rounds With India*

26/1/87.

Bogmonia is sitting looking at him with a contented face. She turns round to me now and again as though she exulted in the poor little fighter's victory. It is a victory to have come even so far. If he knows you, our cup of rejoicing will be full.

Thereafter there was nothing but progress to report. At the beginning of February, Annette wrote that Herman was not so much an invalid as our dear baby come back to us. On February 7th she felt able to leave him to join Henry on his birthday in Calcutta. On February 12th she recorded Herman in her diary as "well." She had kept life in her youngest born.

Herman's illness caused a change of plans as to the hill station to which the children should go in the hot weather. Henry and Annette had not liked the idea of Darjeeling, perhaps because it was a seat of the Bengal Government. Annette had enjoyed Mussoorie five years before and she had thought of going back there. Now, at the first dawn of hope for Herman's life, for Annette was always looking forward, she wrote from Arrah to Henry:

19/1/87.

I want to ask you something, dear, now that hope has sprung up again for our darling. . . . I think you will understand that Herman's illness will have made my ideas change . . . and the result is that I want to have the children nearer than Mussoorie. It is a terrible journey and I could not be easy so far from Herman. Neither do I wish to leave you alone. So I have come to the conclusion that we must put personal likings out of the question and go to Darjeeling. . . . We may like it better than we anticipate. We must have a house I think and a large and comfortable one where good fires can be kept.

Henry, of course, fell in with this. By the building of railways the journey to Darjeeling had been improved immeasurably, since Annette had gone there with her first baby ten years before and had dragged reluctant Henry after her. Then from Rangpur in northern Bengal, Annette, ringing the changes between palki and tonga, had taken all but five days to Darjeeling. Now in March 1887 the whole transit from Calcutta could be accomplished in twenty-seven hours. But it was hardly a luxury ride

### *India Called Them*

for Annette, her four children, her friend-companion Hetty Dendy, and the Fräulein of the moment—one Schuch—picked up in Calcutta. It meant a night journey without sleepers; Annette lay on a mattress on the floor and this was convenient, as the children sleeping on the seats from time to time rolled off on to her rather than on to the floor. It meant breaking the journey for a river ferry by night. It meant another early morning change of trains at the foot of the hills into the narrow gauge mountain railway, from Siliguri to Darjeeling, fifty miles away and 7,000 feet above. "It is a wonderful journey," reported Annette to Henry, "but to enjoy it one should not have travelled all the previous night."

Annette's management triumphed over all troubles, including the temporary defection of the favourite ayah Bogmonia and the failure of her boxes to arrive for nearly a week. The Calcutta khansamah Ali Jan had been sent on ahead and he met Annette at the door of the furnished house she had taken, "with a nice ayah and a nice cow." Bogmonia appeared later but presented a problem. She was married to a sweeper, whom, for good reasons, Annette refused to employ. But she agreed to pay the sweeper's fare to Darjeeling and let him live with Bogmonia in the compound and get a job elsewhere. He will do better, said Annette, if he has to depend on his own exertions rather than on his mistress' affection for his wife.

Thus the family settled down for three years to their life together in India—or as much together as India could make it. For two cold weathers, about four months each, they were united in Calcutta, once in the Ballygunge house, later, in what seemed more salubrious, a house rejoicing in the name *Dilkusha* (Heart's Delight) in Alipur. For the rest of the year the children, with attendants, were in Darjeeling, first in furnished "Woodbine Villa," near the Lieutenant-Governor's residence "The Shrubbery," then in a leased house with their own furniture, "Craigmount." This house had the distinction of being at that time almost the only two-storey house in Darjeeling; it stood on a precipitous hillside and one of the more exciting incidents of a rainy season there to the children was when the stables of the house all but disappeared in a landslide.

All Darjeeling lay dominated by the great Himalayan snows,

### *Last Rounds With India*

with Kinchinjunga as their chief some fifty miles away. The children first saw the snows unexpectedly one morning at the gate of "The Shrubbery" when they had walked out to post a letter. They used to say that thereafter they could at any moment in their lives have found the way back to the precise scene of this unforgettable sight.

Annette had spent 1886 mainly away from Henry with the children. This year, 1887, she contrived to be almost wholly with Henry. After seeing the children established at "Woodbine Villa," under the staid Hetty Dendy and Fräulein Schuch, she returned alone to Calcutta and was there more than four months, working hard at Akbar and the garden, giving and going to parties; one day she recorded with three exclamations, "went on a tricycle! !!" Then at the end of July Henry took privilege leave, and the two of them went together to Darjeeling.

There were three happy months spent all together in the hills and the family indulged their taste for expeditions. They went down to the valley of the Runjit river 5,000 feet below Darjeeling, and tried the giddy excitements of the swinging Cane Bridge across the river; this was a three days' jaunt. They went up to Senchal—the nearest height above Darjeeling from which Mount Everest 100 miles away could be seen. One object of the climb was to see the dawn on Kinchinjunga, and by Henry's anxious forethought they started so much in the middle of the night that they reached the top of Senchal some half-hour before the dawn; they felt colder than previously they had thought it possible to be in India. When Henry's leave was up and he returned to Calcutta, Annette and the children were separated from him for less than a month. They followed him down and were all together for nearly five months in Ballygunge till the time came for Annette to take the children to Darjeeling at the beginning of April.

The last year's plan of Annette's return to Henry in Calcutta could not be repeated in 1887. The staid handsome Hetty Dendy had returned to England. As soon as they had reached Darjeeling, Fräulein Schuch demanded to leave at a month's notice for another post and in fact left in a fortnight.

Annette took this defection with philosophy.



## *India Called Them*

22/4/87.

I really don't care! I do not look for consideration and prefer honest self-seeking to many less inconvenient faults. It is my inability to come and see you which vexes me most in her short notice.

She extemporized a stop-gap teacher of German and besought Henry's help; if German governesses were not to be had, it might be sufficient for the children to practise the language on a German maid. Henry was most willing to help, but expressed a poor opinion of this plan.

5/5/87.

I am ready to advertise for you, but I doubt the getting of a German maid. The German women of the lower class in India are chiefly women of loose character, I believe. . . . However I shall advertise for you if you like. To save time you might telegraph to me. . . . It is very hard that I have had no telegrams from you, and have had no excuse for sending any.

Somewhere or other a German claiming to be a governess was found, but she lasted only six weeks. Fräulein Schuch had sprung a mine. Her successor, Fräulein Bucher, proved more a trouble than a help and departed. Annette one day, after performing "the Herculean task from which with the best intentions the bairns have always recoiled of putting their doll's house tidy," went on to cleanse the Augean stable of the clothes almirah as left by Fräulein. "It was in a state so just like her that I only felt she was quite gone when I had set it right."

Annette decided that the Indian market for Fräuleins would not repay further exploration. She sent an S O S to Halle-ander-Saale in Germany whither Emma Vogel had retired. Emma Vogel came out and was replaced with acclamation in the bosom of the family. Annette sometimes described the good Fräulein as stupid and found her incapacity at sea a trial. But when Annette was herself a few years later in the sickest misery of her life she wrote to Henry:

29/10/90.

If I should be called on to leave my darlings before they are grown up, will you do this for me? Let Fr. Vogel remain in charge of them

### *Last Rounds With India*

till they are well established in health and strength. Nothing could exceed her devotion to me and to them and the affection she and the children have for one another is most real.

To the children there never was any but one real Fräulein; all the rest were bad-tasting imitations. The summoning of Emma Vogel from Halle-an-der-Saale was fresh evidence of the rising influence of the younger Beveridges in family council. They had argued their way out to India to join their parents. Now they dragged Emma Vogel after them.

It became clear that Henry and Annette, even with the family in India, could not be much together. Henry's conscience would not allow him to take any liberties with his work. "I cannot take casual leave without putting many people to great inconvenience and so I do not intend to apply for it." Once when he had planned to come for a long week-end to Darjeeling, the pleaders in a case before him, who had promised to get done by noon on Friday, made such long speeches—and Henry allowed them—that he could not come at all. On another occasion he reported a conversation with the Lieutenant-Governor, who was in flight to Darjeeling.

14/4/89.

The L.G. asked me if I was going up at Easter and I said I had only two days. He replied that the H.C. Bench and Bar had more. I have sessions and cannot extend my time. Do you know that I dreamed last night that you lay in my arms? It would have been very improper had you been there as I was in the verandah and as it was moonlight.

Annette, on the other hand, could not extend her time from the children. She spent on this occasion more than three-and-a-quarter years in India. In that time the great reunion of all six came down to two cold weathers together, about four months each in 1887-88 at Ballygunge and 1889-90 at Alipur, and about four months of Henry's leave in Darjeeling. The cold weather of 1886-87 as a time of happiness together was destroyed by Herman's illness; that of 1889-90 by Willie's illness. For most of the time of the great reunion in India Henry and Annette were apart, he alone in Calcutta, she in Darjeeling with the children. As Henry wrote to her, even in India "you and I must go on working at our separate vocations."

### *India Called Them*

Henry's work in Calcutta, or at least that which interested him most and of which he wrote most to Annette, consisted of trying criminals.

29-30/6/88.

. . . We are trying six people for dacoity and murder. They are said to have robbed an old blind man and to have throttled his wife because she screamed out. . . .

The jury convicted all six dacoits yesterday though after the verdict was given one jurymen said that he found them not guilty.

3/7/88.

. . . I hope to finish my sessions today. Yesterday the jurymen convicted two boatmen of flinging their manjhis overboard into a river in the outer Sunderbunds with intent that he should drown or be eaten by alligators or tigers. Fortunately a steamer rescued him after he had lived for two days up a tree like another Robinson Crusoe. They got five years each.

23/6/89.

It has been a very successful sessions so far, the jury having convicted in every case.

This view of the nature of success in sessions is perhaps unexpected, but it is in accord with Henry's character. The most tender-hearted of men, he was, as he said, hopelessly unsentimental about criminals and with Sir Henry Maine believed in punishment. In the cases which came before him at Sessions, it was clear often that some one or other had committed a brutal crime. Unless that person could be discovered and convicted, the sessions would be a failure. If someone was convicted beyond reasonable doubt in every case, that would be success.

Henry's recreations in Calcutta consisted mainly of enjoying his garden and books; sending books and fruit to Annette; pouring out his mind to her; doing kindnesses. He thought of buying a horse and was weighed, finding that he would ride about fifteen stone. He had a friend to chum with him, and was exercised greatly about the extravagance of the friend's daughters. He concerned himself about the starting in life of the son of a former civilian now dead; had the young man to stay with him; was on tenterhooks as to whether he would pass his examinations; finally lent him a substantial sum. This young man later became

### *Last Rounds With India*

a distinguished civilian—Sir Walter Williamson. Long before that he had not only repaid Henry but, as the one return which as a youngster he could make, had delighted Henry's children by presenting to them his most cherished possession of a stamp collection. This, in pleasant relations, was one of the most fruitful of Henry's exercises in compassion.

5/5/88.

The mali is anxious that you should send him or bring him some orchids. The lawn is looking nice now. You will be amused to hear that I am developing a taste for mooning about the grounds and for visiting the stables. I am half angered with books and reading and prefer to think or stroll. . . .

Thoughts of you and the children always comfort me and I can sing with King David.

I to the hills will lift mine eyes  
From whence doth come mine aid.

22/5/89.

I am still busy reading my father's History and like some of it well.

He is horrified at the opium trade. . . . In concluding his remarks on the Rohilla War, my father writes: "Until the distinctions between right and wrong are abolished, there cannot be a successful vindication of the Rohilla War." So I think my love for trenchant language is inherited.

28/4/89.

I wish you could see our crotons now. . . .

I am going to send you another volume of Howell, that containing the trials of Alice Lisle, Elizabeth Gaunt, the account of Monmouth's execution etc. Read poor Mrs. Gaunt's last words. They burnt her—the wretches.

10/7/88.

I have been reading Miss Thackeray's *Village on the Cliff*—a charming story but she takes more interest in natural scenery and in reflections than in her characters. I am reading Homer. The 6th book is wonderfully beautiful. . . . I am glad that you liked Johnson. . . .

Many thanks for the children's letters. Willie's preciseness is delightful.

4/5/88.

. . . Did you see that a wretched young woman died at Kilburn from eating twelve hot cross buns! had she done it for a wager? . . . I hope soon to send the children some mangos. . . .

I know that you are sorry for me in my loneliness and indeed I

### *India Called Them*

am sad to be without you and the children. But still I would rather be here than at the Club or in a flat or boarding house in Calcutta. I really enjoy the flowers and the crotons, the lawn etc. and I weary of the company of people I don't care about. Everything, thanks to you, is so comfortable here—the writing room—the verandah—the bedroom &c., I like the rose that the mali brings me in the morning, the respectable cat asking for his milk, the coachman saying his prayers in the garden, the letter from Darjeeling on my return from Court.

“We must run glittering like a brook

In the open sunshine or we are unblessed,”

says Wordsworth. Heaven preserve us all from such a feeling.

5/6/88.

Williamson has accepted the appointment in the Burma police and goes off tomorrow. I lent him some money to buy a sword etc. So there is one good thing settled, I think. It is satisfactory that he is provided for.

1/7/88.

That is a delightful letter of Samuells. There are some nice people in the world after all. Why then is the world not nicer than it is?

4/5/89.

Ogbourne and I have been settling our account. He is easily pleased, poor man, though much worried by his daughter's extravagance in dress. I suppose Mrs. O. looks upon it as the Govt. does the building of war-ships, or Ram Chandra Chatterjee regards the paying of Rs. 500 for going up in the Spencerian balloon.

The reference in the last letter is to one of the sensations of the Calcutta season of 1888-89, when a balloonist came to give a display of dropping by parachute. The Calcutta gas proved not to be equal to the task of raising both balloon and parachute. After one failure to go up at all Mr. Spencer, not wishing to disappoint the spectators completely, lightened the balloon by leaving the parachute behind and sailed off southwards not to death but to descend in due course safely in the Sunderbunds, balloon and all. The story of Ram Chandra Chatterjee is probably apocryphal.

Once, in spite of what he and Annette had agreed in their courtship, Henry went out and suffered something like a lecture. And once he suffered from toothache. On each occasion he made

### *Last Rounds With India*

a characteristic comment. All of us have suffered from speakers like half-turned taps but few have thought of that description for them. All of us have suffered from toothache, without being reminded of the last days of Socrates.

2/6/88.

Harrison did not say a word about Regulus or the Imperial race. I suppose that was in his prepared speech.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps when he saw how black most of the pupils were he hesitated to speak of the Imperial race. Cotton described Harrison to me as having a "torrent of words"; well it is not a torrent for they flow very gently or indeed rather dribble. They come like water from a tap only partially turned on—unending but not rapid or impressive. Colonel Perneau whispered to me that he was prolix, and I replied yes he speaks slowly because he is speaking to the reporters and not to us.

10/7/88.

I have really enjoyed existence this afternoon. The feeling of relief from pain is so intense and also that of deliverance from dread of the coming night. The two last nights were terrible nights, and were spent by me chiefly in walking up and down the verandah. Whenever I lay down and tried to sleep the pain started again but I was glad you were away, for the pain would have disturbed you. There was a hole in the tooth taken out but Mr. Woods said that the trouble was not there but at the root and so the stopping did me no good.

The pain and the relief made me think of Socrates putting his feet up on his charpoy the last day of his life and enjoying the pleasure of not feeling the pressure of his chains. They were taken off the morning of the last day. Socrates said it was strange how pain and pleasure were combined and that it seemed to him as if God being unable to abolish pain altogether had arranged that these extremes should meet. . . .

Last night in my weary paces up and down the verandah I often heard a big fish jump in the tank. . . .

13/7/88.

I am afraid that you are not well and are bothered about governesses etc. Well, always remember that the wisest thing in India and else-

<sup>1</sup> The occasion was the distribution of prizes at La Martinière, a college for students of European extraction. The printed report of Sir Henry Harrison's address as given in the *Englishman* of June 2, 1888, does make him call upon the students to emulate the spirit of Regulus and "never to forget that they belong to an imperial race." The names of some of the student prize-winners suggest that though they may have been European they certainly were not British by race. Either the report was based on a copy of what the speaker planned to say but in the end did not say—or Henry did not listen throughout.

## *India Called Them*

where is not to fret. It may be very foolish but I still feel happy and elated at the idea that I have got rid of my toothache and especially that I had the sense to go to the dentist and that I had my tooth out without anaesthetics and without howling. . . .

By the way if you survive me, as I hope you will, you might collect my contributions to the C. R. and the J. A. B. etc. and publish them as a volume of essays. That is, of course, if you think it would pay. I think the three articles on Patna City and the Patna Massacre, that on Rousseau, and the first on Warren Hastings might be worth preserving.

The occasion for reprinting Henry's articles did not arise. But the recording angel Annette gathered them all together from first to last and bound them with her own articles in five volumes of *Beveridge Varia*; sayings from each of those named by Henry as possibly worth preserving are used below to introduce the Epilogue.<sup>1</sup> These articles were a small selection only of what he wrote; Henry was always writing as well as reading.

Annette meanwhile in Darjeeling had a life filled by children and the problem of finding them education; by guests and chums for company and economy; by riding and expeditions; by such reading as she could squeeze in. For education she was fortunate in being able to draw on the masters of St. Paul's school in Darjeeling; Letty and Willie under personal tuition made a flying start with Euclid and Algebra; with Fräulein Vogel and an English governess there was no lack of lessons. One set of friends or another shared Craigmount through nearly the whole season of 1888. Without them the house for Annette would often have seemed unprotected.

1/7/88.

It is late. All are in bed. The chokidar syce sleeps the sleep of the mentally unincumbered below and troubles himself not if many come and go and we are all carried away. He is our guard but I don't think him so efficient as "Quiz" [the family mongrel].

Riding was an almost daily resource, though one which Annette and the others enjoyed more than Willie, whose repeated tumbles caused searching of heart in Calcutta as well as in Darjeeling.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 370. Another important article not mentioned by Henry in July 1888, because not then published, was on the Administration of Justice in Bengal. See p. 381 below.

## *Last Rounds With India*

26/6/88.

I could hardly make you understand (poor but most beloved *ryot*) how we enjoy our rides. It has just struck me why I feel so exhilarated by them: I forget my deafness—it is no impediment to efficiency and I am cheered to a most hoping degree. When we came home tonight and found your fruit—the beautiful fruit waiting for us—and our charming house now doubly pleasant by its porch—and Herman's toys and the other things in the basket—we were all overcome with gratitude to you—my dearest—for you give us all and it is your labour only which causes us such uprising of thankfulness. . . .

Through all this loving interchange there ran one thread of controversy—on church attendance. The dispute began soon after Annette arrived in Calcutta, raged even during the height of Herman's illness, and reverberated long after. Annette was set on sending the children to church on Sundays. Henry objected. His side of the controversy is not fully represented in the surviving correspondence; Annette had a way of not cherishing letters that she did not like from Henry. But Annette's letters were kept by Henry with less selection. From these the line that he took is clear. He argued that sending the children to church now would be a confession of failure on their sceptical parents' parts, and a shifting of responsibility from the parents' shoulders; in an unguarded moment he cited his great exemplar John Stuart Mill. Only four days after the first dawn of hope for Herman, Annette was writing from Arrah:

23/1/87.

I cannot discuss the question of church-going by letter. . . . You do not see it as I do or you could not have made the remark about a Hindu temple or a Mosque. Probably I was too tense to express myself well. I had not expected you to object, because you let the children go to service in Southport and were willing for Letty to go on Christmas Day with Hetty. . . . I would like you to hear my reasons and I have set my heart very much on getting your permission.

When Herman seemed sufficiently better to let Annette contemplate return to Calcutta, she came back also to controversy.

7/2/87, from Arrah.

You are wrong in supposing that in wishing to send the children to church, I wish to shift a responsibility from our shoulders. No



### *India Called Them*

church-going can compensate for want of moral training at home and I therefore never suggested this. I am considering the children's happiness—the satisfaction of the emotional wants of youth.

Mill is an unhappy example to have chosen to give me—his own youth was arid and he felt it so; and surely his book on Theism is not the reflection of a happy mind. . . . Our dear children are, I am thankful to say, not juvenile Mills and I trust that at least in one particular which I have heard you reprobate, they will not resemble that intellectual monster when they grow up.

Annette had not forgotten the first letter which Henry wrote to her after proposing marriage, with its eight pages on Mill and Mrs. Taylor, though that was probably not the part of the letter which had most held her attention at the time. Now she proceeded with an argument based on the severed family life.

I have no objection to their becoming professing Christians. How should I have? I see many professed Christians whose lives I admire and the tone of whose mind is to me most admirable. Added to this they have a happiness in their faith which I certainly lack.

I cannot see that to send the children to church is a confession of failure. You and I were bred under religious influences. I for my part owe a deep debt to these influences and I think them advantageous for at least early years and do not know how we can make compensation for them and this especially in the severed family life we lead. You and I may or may not be three months together with our children. It is a practical necessity that they should be under influences other than ours. Leaving them alone i.e. untaught on Sunday, with some however innocent recreation, will not supply the void I would supply by church-going. Suppose you arrange something to carry them on through February, they leave you in March. How would you propose to continue the teaching?

Of course, Annette won her point. In Calcutta the children came to be taken regularly to Sunday service, usually in the cathedral; in Darjeeling Annette found a Presbyterian chapel which they enjoyed. Henry agreed that in the up-bringing of the children the responsibility and therefore the decision were Annette's. She, on the other hand, played the game by him. She did nothing to make her children members of any Church and they did not become so. When, during the nearly fatal illness of her son Willie at Darjeeling, a minister friend suggested



*Herman Beveridge in July 1890*



### *Last Rounds With India*

that as a precaution he should be baptized, Annette politely declined the proposal. She never really expected any of her children to die under her care.

24/11/89.

I said that baptism must be left for the boy's future decision and that you had been very generous to me about the religious education of the children. I trust this is what you do not dislike me to state.

But the controversy about religion went on reverberating throughout the time together in India. Long after the children's attendance at church on Sunday had become a settled practice, Henry wrote to Annette who complained of not knowing his inmost thoughts.

24/4/89.

I don't think I have many reserves from you. I cannot follow you in your seeking to lay hold once more on Christianity, after having on one memorable occasion had to declare that you were not a Christian. I feel that you are a little slipping away from me on this matter.

And a few days later he wrote Annette another letter which he feared would give her pain.

29/4/89.

I am very sorry to have had to do this, and will only plead that your previous letter hurt me a good deal. I shall say however that the letter is the last of its kind that you will get from me. I have no wish to send you thorns and will not continue the discussion.

Annette, after her wont, did not keep the painful letter. But she did keep a charming letter which artful Henry addressed the same day to the children and which was full of pleasant messages for Annette and a story "rather for your mother than for you." These parents were finding it very convenient to have children.

There was a real difference of attitude on matters of religion between the two. Henry, having been brought up in the Scottish church, when he went right over to agnosticism, stayed there firmly. Annette having been brought up a Unitarian had not so far to go; in truth she moved very little. She called herself not a Christian at marriage, to please Henry more than from conviction; she salved her conscience once by quoting Gladstone as authority for the view that Unitarians were not Christians.

### *India Called Them*

She never escaped the felt necessity of believing in God, a supreme power for good. She felt this necessity more as she grew older. In the same letter in which she reported her rejection of baptism for her sick son, she told Henry where she stood:

24/11/89.

This illness like every other trouble which has befallen me of recent years has led me back to my faith in God in a very real manner, for in the first days of my close watchfulness, I do not think I could have done my duty to my boy—if I had not felt the near presence of help and strength beyond my own. Fourteen days and nights, and no worry, no undue strain, and no neglect! It was only a mind kept calm and quiet by some spirit of peace that could have done it.

Henry and Annette were two people, not one; two minds that never gave up their independence. They were two people who, through all disagreements, never ceased to write love letters to one another.

May 6th, 1888, from Calcutta.

My dear Love,

I had a great longing for you last night. I thought of our marriage, of our stay at Serhampore, of our journey home, of our meeting at Gauhati. . . . Is it wrong that I should dwell with pleasure on your sweetness to me at Gauhati? You were just as good to me at Faridpur! Then I thought dear that I loved you in every way, and I was so happy with you and I prayed that we might never have any more quarrels or say harsh words to one another. If only we got on together always and thoroughly, I felt that I did not mind a rap about the High Court or other external matters.

And the dear children too, if only they keep well and happy. Poor Herman is retarded, but I hope he will be all right in a year or two. Sometimes I feel that we could be so happy leaving it all and living at home on pension, but reason tells me no, and I feel as if it would be ungrateful to leave India so long as she will have me. . . .

Do you know that I sometimes think that my highest duty was not to have married again but devoted myself to India? And then I answer, Yes it might have been, but I was not strong enough for it. Celibacy, says Robertson, is for angels or beasts. And I am sure that if I had not had you, I would have drifted into something contemptible. You have done me so much good in so many ways. I like so much your lady-like manners, your neatness in everything, even to the way in which you eat. . . . I love you in every way. . . .

### *Last Rounds With India*

How sad you looked that day at the Victoria Station when I went off to India without you! And how happy we were at Keavill!

Annette knew well that teasing thoughts—of duty to India and not marrying again—often passed pleasingly through Henry's mind. And she knew her answer.

May 8th, 1888, from Darjeeling.

My dearest,

Your love letter was waiting for me when we reached home after an afternoon on Lebong. It was very sweet to me, but I think your notion of doing more service to India than you have done—if unmarried—is all wrong. How could you do the country better service than by working hard at doing justice? You could but have done one thing you have not done; viz: spent elsewhere the money your family has cost you—a very doubtful good. On the other hand you would have left no renewal of your character and qualities to take your place in the world. Besides why make a Moloch of India more complete than she is? Do we not have to suffer for her as it is, and why should we have to bear a heavier cross than we do? Our separations are expiations enough for holding the country.

There are things and classes in India which have brushed out all my poetry about her people. Still dear! if the sentiment still glows in you I can appreciate it.

I am often heartsick to think of you alone and long to go down to you for a few days. But I cannot as my house is.

Like you I certainly hope for no sources of disagreement with you—but as after any we may have had, I doubt if I could love you better (though I think I have not always been wrong) I don't attach much importance to them.

I fancy no two persons ever agree entirely and nothing but hypocrisy or weakness can make them seem to do so. I might have promoted quietude by flattering you by pretended agreement in one or two matters—but you would have been far less happy and confident of me than when I play my cards on the table.

These love letters illustrate all the main problems for Henry and Annette in these days of reunion.

*I felt that I did not mind a rap about the High Court.* Henry just at the time of the reunion had filled the cup of his offending against established views by the evidence which he submitted to a Commission sent from England to report on the Public Services in India:

23/12/86.

What I specially want to say is that, in my opinion, no settlement will be satisfactory which does not include the abolition of the system of examinations in England for the Indian Civil Service. . . . It may be that this matter is not one with which the Commission has been fully empowered to deal. But I am encouraged to dwell upon it by observing that the Government resolution of the 4th October required the Commission to devise a scheme which is likely to be final, and which will do full justice to the claims of natives of India. Now it seems to me clear that finality can never be attained until the geographical monopoly, as it has been called, of the present system has been done away with. It is idle to say that the natives of India can and do go to England to be examined. Only a few can do so, and if they are successful, the expense and expatriation which they have been subjected to hamper them in after life. We need only imagine the case to be reversed, and that the rule was that appointments in England were to be given on examinations in India, to see that the supposed remedy is utterly inadequate. It is hopeless to attempt to conciliate by merely diminishing an invidious distinction, without entirely abolishing it, as Sydney Smith showed long ago in a famous passage of Peter Plymley's letters. The attempt reminds one of the Persian proverb quoted by Badaoni, Kajdar, O Murez, hold the vessel aslant, but don't let its contents run out, or more briefly, upset but don't spill. The familiar line of Vergil *Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur*, is still the only expression befitting the ruler of diverse nations. So long then as we have two sets of men working side by side and doing precisely the same work, but on different rules of pay and promotion, there will not cease to be heartburnings and discontent, as well as needless expense to the State.

I have no wish to speak ill of the competition-system. It was an immense improvement on the old rule of patronage, and is a fine instance of England's stately march, and of the manner in which her concessions "broaden slowly down from precedent to precedent." But the system has had its day, and should give place to another. India has now a sufficient supply of educated young men within her borders, and need not import administrators, except for special purposes. Act II of 1857 has borne fruit, and has fulfilled the purposes set forth in its preamble.

It seems to me that the very fact that natives of India have been able to pass the examinations at home is a *reductio ad absurdum*

### *Last Rounds With India*

of the system, for they who have so passed into the Civil Service are able men but not a whit better in position, or abilities than many of their brothers, and cousins, and fellowcaste men who have stayed at home, and entered the uncovenanted service, or become pleaders, or doctors. It is chiefly the accident of their parents having more money, or more courage and fewer prejudices than their neighbouts which has placed them in the Civil Service. Why should India pay unnecessarily high for their services? It is absurd to suppose that two or three years of residence in England, and of absence from India have so enhanced their aptitude for Indian administration that they are worth double their original value. It certainly seems to me that those who wanted to keep natives out of the Civil Service, and for that purpose lowered the age of admission were at least logical in their procedure, for it is only on the supposition that the interests of the empire require the Civil Service, with an insignificant exception or two, to be composed of Englishmen, that the competitive examination in England can be defended.

Henry can hardly have expected that giving evidence like this in December 1886 in India would improve his prospects of promotion. There were fresh appointments to the High Court in this Darjeeling time, and Henry once more was passed over.

21/4/88, from Ballygunge.

You will see in the Englishman that Gordon and Rampini have been appointed to officiate in the High Court. I heard about it on Monday at Belvedere from Man Mohan Ghose and so I am not taken by surprise. Gordon is I believe a good man, and Rampini is not I suppose much amiss. And now let us to other subjects.

I met Allen this morning and he remarked that one reason Willie could not ride was that he had not a proper saddle. . . .

23/4/88, from Ballygunge.

I went on my tricycle yesterday evening to Chatterji's garden and saw some beautiful cediums—some white and also crimson ones. . . .

Your motto *Ne Cede Malis* is a comfort to me whenever I look at it, and I cannot but be pleased with the little paragraph in the *Indian Nation* sent herewith.

I can stand the supersession and even worse blows, but I won't deceive myself or you and say that I have not felt it, or that I believe the H. C. are right in passing me over. There, my dear, I did not mean to refer to the matter again but I think you will be pleased to hear about the influence of the motto and about the *Indian Nation*.



### *India Called Them*

Henry did not like being passed over but he bore no malice. He reported a friendly talk with Rampini and he was charitable to the Lieutenant-Governor.

5/5/88.

Do not refrain your feet from the Shrubbery. They are nice people and the L.G. probably could not help himself and felt bound to do what the H.C. recommended. He is very anxious, and properly so, not to have a collision with them.

*"My highest duty was not to have married again."* Jeanie's ghost never came between Henry and Annette, but neither was she ever forgotten. One September (it was the day before the anniversary of his first marriage seventeen years before) Jeanie came to Henry's mind. He wrote to Annette in Darjeeling.

11/9/88.

It has been borne in upon me that I ought to go once and see Jeannie's tomb and surroundings. I have often wished to go and have put it off and off and I know if I do not go now I may never go at all. It will not be a cheerful or enjoyable trip to me but I feel it a sort of duty. I shall not forget you and all that you have been and are to me when there.

"My darling wife," he wrote to Annette two days later, "I like to look at you on my table, earmarked as my slave by your pendants," and the same night he set off for Barisal to make his pilgrimage to a memory. He spent two days there, but of what he found at Jeanie's grave there is no record. On the day of his return to Calcutta he wrote:

18/9/88.

I have not time to write all my adventures &c. for I must go to Court. . . . How glad I shall be to see you all in October. Mr. Lucas died at Barisal about two months ago and left his family in involved circumstances. Mrs. L. and her two daughters are coming to Calcutta and will put up with me. I wish you were here to help me in looking after them. . . .

Have you not business in Calcutta and could you not come down and return with me?

About Jeanie the rest is silence. The past was past. Henry never went to Barisal again, not even when eleven years later he made his free scholar's pilgrimage to India.

### *Last Rounds With India*

*"There are things and classes in India which have brushed out all my poetry about her people."* Henry and Annette had come to think differently about India, as about religion. To Annette the two years that she spent in Calcutta trying to start her school, before she married Henry, were a searing experience.

22/9/84.

I expect no happiness in Calcutta except through you. It is for me a place of jarring and discord—of falsehood and contention—of over-strain and loneliness. I know no spot on earth with which I feel so uncongenial. Yet you will redeem it and we will have pleasant times together.

So Annette had written from England to Henry some years before when there was expectation that she would join him posted in Calcutta. It was not only Calcutta but all India now that for Annette needed Henry's redeeming presence. India had not been burned into her as into him. With the sands of his service-time running low her mind was already walking westward. The future of her children would be in England. There was one child for special care.

*"Poor Herman is retarded."* As the darkening new background to the rest of the family life came the realization that all was not well with Herman. This realization did not come at once. After taking the family to Darjeeling for the first time in 1887, Annette paid a visit to Calcutta and returning to Darjeeling at the end of July reported gleefully to Henry how *"all the dear children met us with radiant and rosy faces."* Nearly a year later, after a winter together again at Ballygunge, Annette wrote: *"all the children are well; it is certain now that they have taken no harm in Calcutta."*

But this was putting a bright face on fear. Herman was then and always a beautiful child, the picture of rosy health. But at 2½ years he was not developing normally. He remained at his baby tricks: *"Herman was very gay and sweet this evening, though he did put his finger in a candle and turn head over heels surreptitiously."* He was not learning to speak. Near the end of his third year of life Henry and Annette faced this fact.

## *India Called Them*

11/9/88.

I am sorry, wrote Henry, that Herman is still such a baby but I agree with you in not making oneself anxious. We can do nothing and at all events he is happy now. Speech must come in time.

As another winter and spring passed without speech coming, both felt the need for doing something. Annette in Darjeeling had found a doctor whose special interest was children. She got Henry to send to her from Calcutta her diaries and her letters recording the illness day by day. She went through it all again with the doctor and wrote it out for Henry.

14/9/89.

I have been long sitting with Dr. Cobb and going through that cruel record of Herman's illness. The result is one to make us both rejoice. . . . He does not think the intelligence affected in any considerable degree but that part of the brain dealing with words unmistakably so. He advises us to try to put ourselves in communication with the intelligence by any means—words or signs—and so to educate. . . . He says he sees no ground for despair. . . . By and bye when older (and able without suffering to leave his ayah) he can go to a kindergarten school or even a deaf and dumb school if necessary. Infantile haemiplegia Dr. Cobb calls it—aphasia.

The paralysis of the illness, as the doctors had recognized at the time, had meant that there had been some kind of effusion of the brain. The paralysis had passed, but damage had remained.

Henry, for his part, though he always recognized Annette as the senior partner for decisions about the children, was not a father who thought that providing an income to keep his family was all his father's duty. In the autumn of 1889, while planning if possible to come to Darjeeling for Christmas to see the family as a whole, he suggested to Annette that she might come down to Calcutta for a visit before then, bringing Herman with her:

1/11/89.

I feel that I have a duty to him more than to the others, and though I would dearly love to see them all, yet coming down here might interfere with their education. I should like to study Herman more, though I have no wish to try any experiments on him. Kanchi might come down with him and stay as long as he was here or indeed it might be enough if she came down with you on the train and then

### *Last Rounds With India*

went back. I think that we could manage him without her for a month. The seeing new things might do the poor fellow good.

Henry and Annette's plans for their younger son were interrupted. As Henry was writing this letter from Calcutta, India delivered her second blow at the family at their elder son Willie in Darjeeling. For the end of October Annette had planned an expedition with all the elder children along one of the great mountain ridges—Phallut, 10,000 to 12,000 feet high—which hid Mount Everest from Darjeeling; the family were to march—on ponies and in dandies—fifteen miles or so each day from bungalow to bungalow. But, just before they could start, one of the ponies went lame and two days after they would have started Willie went to bed with a towering fever.

Annette found herself in for another battle with death to save a child. In the first weeks death often seemed near. Willie heard his mother and sisters praying for him. He heard the doctor say once that he was not out of danger, and hearing this he set his jaw, determined to live, and did live. He set his mind also on being able to come down for Christmas dinner, and in that too he just succeeded, after all but two helpless months in bed.

*Come home with us, my dear.*

Annette from Darjeeling to Henry in Calcutta,  
November 23, 1889.

*I don't care a tuppenny damn where we live.*

Henry from Calcutta to Annette in Darjeeling,  
February 1890.

*The death of my dear dear sister has been a very great blow to me. . . . I had thought that she might look after our children. and especially poor dear Herman, and so enable you to come out here for a few months. Dis aliter visum.*

Henry from Calcutta to Annette in Eastbourne,  
August 25, 1890.

*This is another heavy blow for you. . . . He had a happy life, though a sad one for those who loved him.*

Henry from Birbhum to Annette in Eastbourne,  
about Herman, September 24, 1890.

*What hopes and cares and toils, prayers and anxieties and thoughts, must be lavished to rear a child.*

Annette from Eastbourne to Henry in Calcutta,  
October 1890.

*I don't know how you will get educated to the level of a British householder.*

Annette from Eastbourne to Henry in Calcutta,  
March 9, 1891.

## Chapter XVII

### THE FAMILY RETREATS

THE illness of the elder son in 1889, like that of the younger one in 1886-87, had its mysterious features. No one ever seems to have determined whether it was typhoid fever or not. The treatment was as uncertain as the diagnosis. A new drug—sulphonal—had just been introduced and was given as a febrifuge; today it is known only as a narcotic. For some weeks the child was regaled on a diet of fresh fruit and cream; there followed other weeks of starvation on practically nothing at all. "Ah! if only you could give an enema," said one of the doctors once to Annette (there was an unfortunate exchange of doctors in the case). "My dear doctor," she replied, "I have given them scores of times." By the grace of God and his mother, the patient survived both the disease and the doctoring and survived unscathed.

This second illness like the first, of Herman, led to an instant and greater change of plans. In its very first days Henry wrote of Willie:

Everybody tells me it is time he should go home. Lady Wilson says she does not think that he should go home—she knows it. Forbes says he visited seventeen preparatory schools when at home and at last fixed on one at Eastbourne for his boy aged eight.

It was clear that reunion in India was at end.

Will's illness [wrote Annette] has caused the surrender of all that I once desired, indeed if I look only to my wishes still desire.

The only question was whether the whole family should go together or should once more be divided. Henry offered to take 10-year-old Willie home on his three months' privilege leave and place him at a preparatory school or with Maggie while Annette with the others stayed on in Darjeeling:

22/11/89.

Do not at once scout this proposal. I only offer it as a suggestion. . . . If you stayed you could see Phallut. . . . Another great

### *India Called Them*

difficulty in your leaving India next year is your Akbar. I think you should see that printed off before you leave India.

Annette declined ever again to be separated from any of the children, "unless some misfortune happens to make my presence necessary to you more than to the children." Of course she was set on not being separated from Henry either.

23/11/89.

Come home with us, my dear. These long separations are very hard and I must stay with the children. For very long we may have to guard against sequels to this fever and I must take up Herman's training in earnest, once Will is on his legs again. Miserable little legs they are just now! Come home with us, my dear.

This was in late November when Will was still to be in bed another month; Annette was always looking forward.

Henry was equally decided. He was not ready to retire. He was prepared to use his privilege leave to save Annette the journey home. If she decided to go home with all the children—to that, of course, he raised no objection—he would not take furlough to go with her. To that there were objections both of loss of salary and of break in his work.

It was settled that Annette with the four children should leave India finally in the spring of 1890. There followed one of the many major upheavals of Annette's career—parting with the lease of Craigmount, packing some of the Darjeeling furniture, selling the rest—all this interspersed with working on the proofs of Akbar, with writing out a full record of Willie's illness for the trusted Dr. Cobb, with taking up again the problem of Herman. "He is such a darling—but no speech," she wrote to Maggie in January: "he may have to go to a school where speaking is taught but I hope not." As soon as Willie could get about again, she took him and Herman together to stay with a friendly Danish tea-planter on the Lebong spur below Darjeeling, and was encouraged by the way that the two boys made friends. But Herman could not be treated as an ordinary child and there was anxious consideration as to how he should be attended. He was devoted to his ayah Kanchi; should she go with him? Could he be separated from her without pain? Finally Annette decided that a man would be better than Kanchi. The retinue with which

### *The Family Retreats*

in the end she left Darjeeling early in March, and left India by the P. and O. steamer *Bengal* two days later, included Emma Vogel and a Lepcha man-servant Churji.

It included also Henry, so far as Aden. He took privilege leave to help Annette for the first stage of her journey, and he spent five days at Aden waiting for the steamer back to Bombay; he declared afterwards that this gave him all he ever wanted to see of Aden. Just before, he had been chosen as President of the Bengal Asiatic Society for the following year. This gave Annette intense delight, as the first European recognition for Henry. His comment in giving the news to Annette was:

17/12/89.

It is a great honour but I fear it will involve my keeping my brougham again. I could hardly go in a ticca to the meetings could I?

Henry was not "carriage folk" by nature; Annette was. Henry, though he liked the Asiatic Society, was less excited about that than he was about Annette's Akbar. He begged to be allowed to make her index. "I think I am competent to do it and I would like to do it." He gave Annette, before she left India, a free hand as to where she should settle herself and the family and him in Britain. He said that he did not care a tuppenny damn where they settled.

The *Bengal*, leaving Aden, swung round so near the quay that Annette and the children saw Henry's face clearly. Then they turned on Annette's last journey from India.

They reached Plymouth in the last week of April 1890 and left the ship there. Annette's two problems were to decide on where to settle for the education of the elder children, and to discover what gave most hope for Herman. She went first for a week to Dawlish, thence by Clifton to Ilfracombe, where she found excellent lodgings for three months, May to July, at what seems to us now golden age prices: £4-4-0 a week for three sitting-rooms and six bedrooms, piano and service; "I took them—the first I saw, thus ignoring competitive principles." She found also individual tutoring for the children at 3/4 an hour for the two elders taken together and 2/6 an hour for the third child. At Ilfracombe Annette and her four children were joined by Fanny Mowatt and her two boys; the sisters



### *India Called Them*

during Annette's first years at home again were happily friendly.

These west-coast lodgings followed from a first intention to settle for education at Clifton. Annette had had her eye on the west before she left India:

9/1/90, from Darjeeling.

Bristol people are so advanced in many ways that I believe that I may even find a "lip-speaking" school for the dumb there which I believe you would agree with me should bias me in favour of Clifton against Bath. . . .

She announced her decision to Henry from Ilfracombe:

4/5/90.

I have decided to settle at Clifton. I believe that I have done right with the sort of conviction with which Akbar shot Jai Mall. . . . I send you the Head Master's letter. I did not *cry up* Will, only said what he had done, that his teachers had some talent and that he was painstaking and industrious.

Annette found herself not infrequently denying the charge that her children were prodigies, or that she thought them so. But their final destination for a first home in England was not in the west. Annette heard things which set her against Clifton and, while still at Ilfracombe in July, she announced to Henry that the family were going to reside at Eastbourne. Though Henry had assured Annette before she left India that he did not care a tuppenny damn where she settled them all (and she knew that he meant it), every now and again he bobbed up with a suggestion of Scotland. But the last of these arrived on the day on which Annette had taken a four-year lease of a house in Eastbourne, and caused no trouble. Henry really did not mind where he lived, provided the family were together and there was a library within reach. Also they were agreed that they did not want to live in a street if they could help it.

The last weeks at Ilfracombe were made delightful by a visit of Henry's favourite sister. Aunt Maggie endeared herself to the children and fell in love with them. Early in August the whole party left Ilfracombe and, by Lynton, Exmoor and Exeter, travelled by easy stages eastward. Annette and her eldest, Letty, were bound for Eastbourne to find a home; Maggie, Fräulein,

### *The Family Retreats*

the Lepcha Churji, and the younger children were bound for Hindhead, to stay with Annette's sister Fanny and her brother-in-law James Mowatt at the new house which they had built there—Kingswood Firs. The family parted at Woking, to be brought together again two days later by unawaited disaster.

Maggie, walking through fir-woods along the mile-long drive of Kingswood Firs, was overtaken by James Mowatt with his two sons, driving back to the house in a light trap with two horses, and accepted his offer of a lift. Soon after the horses bolted, the carriage struck a tree and all were thrown out. Maggie's skull was fractured and she died without becoming conscious. The others were injured in various degrees.

Annette, summoned back from Eastbourne, sent a telegram to a friend in Calcutta—Alicia Allen—to break the news to Henry and followed it with a letter.

13/8/90.

It is a singular fact that close round in this country there were several accidents on this same day. Some people think there was an atmospheric disturbance which caused excitement. In this case no one seems to know why the horses went off. . . .

My thoughts of Maggie are all of gracious and tender ways and I feel that we have been deprived of a most beautiful power for good on our children. They loved her and she had always some quaint or poetic thought or quotation to give them. . . . If it can comfort you to know that I had come to love her very dearly and felt great content and peace in her society, take the comfort my dear husband. You can hardly grieve more than I.

Henry got the delayed telegram twelve days later. Maggie was nearer to him than to anyone else in the world. Yet, in his grief, characteristically, he thought always of others.

25/8/90.

The death of my dear sister has been a very great blow to me. I had so counted on seeing her again, and upon going excursions with her, and I had thought that she might look after our children, and especially poor dear Herman, and so enable you to come out here for a few months. *Dis aliter visum.*

I have not gone to Maldah. It is better to stay here alone and think out matters, I don't approve of trying to run away from one's grief.

## *India Called Them*

The accident must have been a terrible shock to you and the children. . . .

If you think it necessary, will you kindly send two or three pounds from me to Phemie. She will probably have some extra expenses for mourning.

I am glad that none of our children saw the accident. Poor James—I am very sorry for him and have done my best to console him.

I am very sorry for you. You were not well before and this additional grief must weigh heavily upon you. Keep up my dear and do not despair. We must endure till the end.

This was in August. Fate had another blow ready for September.

Herman, in England, continued as in India, the picture of rosy health and intelligence, but speaking noises only, no words, though well on in his fifth year. He was a creature of friendly mischief—a young human brain that could not communicate. Already in Ilfracombe Annette had realized that Herman might never become normal. One Sunday evening in June, "after our prayers and our singing," she talked to the trio about him. In a letter written that same night to come to them after her death, she repeated what she had said:

15/6/90.

We know not what will become of our little Herman. Perhaps by God's grace and the mercy of nature, he will become as others are. Perhaps not! My children I leave him to you, a sacred trust. Love him and guard him and protect him.

Hope for Herman was becoming doubt. But Annette never gave up trying. She did all she could to make communication with Herman herself and through the elder children.

4/5/90.

I believe I ought to give Herman quantities of toys. He learns from each one. The elder children are most kind to him and Tutu has established a great ascendancy—she orders and he obeys.

She sought what seemed to be the best possible advice. Twice with great weariness and expense she travelled from Ilfracombe to see a knighted specialist, about herself and about Herman, preparing the way by a detailed history of Herman's case, inviting whatever consultation the doctor thought best. She was told

### *The Family Retreats*

for her trouble that she should not expect to get any better of her own deafness. She was told that Herman had aphasia caused by his illness and was advised to keep him at home.

This suited her own desires. But Henry thought that stronger and more professional treatment might be needed, and Annette addressed herself to the problem of finding a home where such treatment and teaching could be given. She wrote, after Maggie's death, from Eastbourne:

24/8/90.

Our little Herman is much in my thoughts and I am now proceeding to discover to the best of my power what is to be done for him. I have today written to Dr. L. Browne to ask the object of the house and the class of cases admitted.

There is no doubt of progress in the little one. . . . What I find, now that a little leisure is vouchsafed to me, is that he listens and looks when I talk—not always—no child does—and is more companionable. He does like other little children so much! He got a rebuff on the beach, for he walked up to a boy and tickled his neck—a child of his own size—and the boy gave him a thump.

This rebuff is almost the last thing recorded of Herman. The day after she wrote this Annette signed the lease of a house at Eastbourne, and went into it a fortnight later. On the day after that Herman fell ill and in twenty-four hours he died. It was five weeks only from Maggie's death.

By Herman's death, Annette's spirit became nearer to being broken than at any other time in all her adult life. She fell ill and had to take to her bed. For once her letters to Henry show almost the accents of despair.

October 1890.

I cannot write even to you about the little creature. By and by I will try. I have only one way, now I am feeble, to get back to daily life and that is—to look rarely inwards. . . . I am afraid, my dear, that you will find me very tiresome for I cannot get on without much help and care. I would not have you take furlough but retire as soon as you conveniently can. Don't trouble about bringing things with you. Only what you wish please bring. Burn my old letters dear—they are worthless now and I just feel that nothing matters if I can have you. . . .

I thought myself much better but am cold and low this afternoon.

### *India Called Them*

I can't sleep well without an opiate. . . . There have been times lately when I thought I should never see you again.

I have no heart to think of Akbar. That must wait till you are back to help me back to life. I am so weak-brained that I cannot bear to have two ideas presented to me at once. . . . I do not know when you will come but I look for you as those who look for the morning.

Henry's response was characteristic. Four days after Herman's death, though before the news reached him, he had written from Birbhum:

16/9/90.

Do not fret about poor Herman. He may come right yet. But if not we shall make a purse for him.

When the news reached him, broken through the kindly Alicia Allen, he wrote:

24/9/90, from Birbhum.

This is another heavy blow for you. . . . Poor dear child. Perhaps it is as well that he died before us, and did not live to be an orphan, but his death must have been a great shock and grief to you. . . . I am glad that I went with you as far as Aden and so got to know the child so well. He had a happy life though a sad one for those who loved him.

30/9/90, Alipore.

Poor dear Herman. Kanchi will be sorry when she hears the news.

Annette came to see with Henry that the release was merciful: "after this last attack he could never have been himself again."

October 1890.

What hopes and cares and toils, prayers anxieties and thoughts, must be lavished to rear a child. And how many a man or woman gives no sign of all the labour he or she has demanded. Yet surely most parents are as we are. . . . I do not believe my dear little child's life is ended. . . . I am going to put Christmas roses on his little grave. I shall send you a photograph if any friend comes and takes it but I cannot go to a stranger.

In this same letter Annette took up other topics: told how she had removed Will from the first school found for him which had proved to be "a one horse shay emblazoned with humbug," and discussed the pensioning of Ramyad the bearer and Hurree's

### *The Family Retreats*

widow. Soon after she was making suggestions to her brother-in-law David to get a collection of Maggie's poems printed; was taking up her interest again in the reviews of her book on Akbar; was taking infinite trouble to arrange through a friend the safe return to India of Churji, Herman's Lepcha attendant; was "squaring Stigand Major," that is to say frightening to death a bigger boy who on the way home from school had, in the manner of boys, been making life a burden to her precious Will. She lay in wait for this unlucky larger boy as he came out of school to go home, and told him that the next time he touched Will on the road it was her intention to instruct her solicitor to make him over to the police for assault; Annette added that she was a woman of her word.

1/2/91.

For once I was thankful that I look so dreadful when I am angry! My trio said that they would not for any consideration have been in Stigand Major's shoes when I looked like that.

Annette did not content herself with putting to flight the enemies of her son. She was setting herself to cultivate friends for him. "The girls have friends *galore* but Will has no chums to go to school with, and to be an only boy is a detriment."

She began to see that she was doing many things which would normally fall to Henry.

7/2/91.

Letty says that we shall all feel it very strange at first to have you and of course we shall after such a long absence, but we all think it will be delightful. Only you must remember that I have had so much to arrange without consulting you that I may *seem* despotic from habit.

Among other things Annette was learning something of the trials of urban householders. She and Henry had lived for a good many years in India with few or no drains. Now she learned that all is not sanitation that is drains in England. The drains of The Croft, though they had just been passed as sound by a municipal inspector, proved to be unsound in the extreme; they let sewage gas into the china closet and other unsuitable places; the cook went to hospital dangerously ill with typhoid fever. "At this moment," wrote Annette reporting on these events, "thréé

### *India Called Them*

gentlemen are considering my drains—my landlord, a sanitary architect whom I called in as an independent person and another man to me unknown.”

7/2/91.

Three days last week I was inspected. . . . I have just looked into the garden and find it is dug up here and there. . . . There is a municipal storm going round me and I have just had a sub-committee of the municipality to crown the inspections. . . . The poor cook is really getting better and may recover if no relapse occurs.

Later Annette reported the satisfaction of her doctor: he said that the whole proceedings of the Croft case had been most useful and by calling attention to lax inspection might do “very great and lasting good to the town.” Annette was less enthusiastic about the Croft case.

9/3/91.

I say that I wish that a town councillor had been made the instrument of reform, not I . . . I don't know how you will get educated to the level of a British householder.

In the new activities of English life and the launching of the three children at school, the distresses and calamities of the year 1890 faded. But Annette proposed and Henry of course approved a permanent memorial of Herman, the endowment of a cot at the Princess Alice Hospital, “so that some poor children's lives may be brightened by his.”

23/10/90.

I think that (if you agree) I will pay the endowment of the little bed at once. I can do it and I will endeavour to set aside the sum by annual instalments from my income and repay the capital. There are two forms of endowment: one of £1000 nominates 12 patients yearly and one of £500 with half the nominations. It is the £500 I want to give as I think it is most in harmony with our means. . . .

Do you remember asking me not to travel 3rd class? I thought of it when I sent you last week's account. I paid about £8 for our party from Dulverton. It would have cost about £23 first class and I could not spare £23 for such a purpose.

The tablet recording the endowment stands still in the hospital, simply with name and date. Annette thought at first

### *The Family Retreats*

of another inscription for her son who had never spoken. She did not in the end use it, but she pasted it in her diary:

In tender memory of our beloved son Herman and so that in his name there may be ministry of love we have endowed a bed in this hospital

“He being dead, yet speaketh.”



*I am packing all your letters. . . . It is the size of the Buddha boxes which appals me.*

Henry from Alipore to Annette in Eastbourne,  
December 1890.

*I think I shall like Berhampore.*

Henry from Berhampore to Annette in Eastbourne,  
December 1891.

*I think that all I have ever done, and it has been little enough, has been due to my forgetting the things behind. . . . I have fulfilled my destiny more than I used to think.*

Henry from Berhampore to Annette in Eastbourne,  
March 1892.

*I am glad that the children cannot swallow the Bible wholesale.*

Henry from Berhampore to Annette in Eastbourne,  
May 22, 1892.

*Isn't Letty's birthday on the 10th July? What an old young lady she has become.*

Henry from Berhampore to Annette in Eastbourne,  
June 1892.

## Chapter XVIII

### HENRY'S LAST STATION

**H**ENRY'S first reaction to the death of his sister Maggie was the desire to leave India as soon as possible and finally. He had played with the hope that Maggie might look after the children, so that Annette could come out for a last winter with him in India. This hope was gone.

13/9/90.

I am so upset and so to speak broken-hearted by Maggie's death that I feel as if I could not go on working, and that I ought to come home and be with you. However I know that it is not safe to be guided by feelings. I shall certainly go on working now and you need not fear that I shall break down. I want to do whatever is best for you and the children. I have no duty, I think to India, and both my duty and my inclination seem to tell me that I should bid a final adieu to this country in April. Let me know what you think. . . .

I have nothing to keep me here after I have served a year at the Asiatic and put the Public Library straight.

This was written by Henry from Alipur in September on the day after Herman's death, though in ignorance of it. If Herman had gone on living, Henry would probably have carried out his first intentions, of coming home for good at once to help Annette with the care of this child, towards whom he felt a special duty, as he did towards every creature in need of help. But the second death removed one reason for leaving India. And India had her claws in Henry more firmly than he knew.

At the end of September, even after he had heard of Herman's death, Henry was still inclined to finish with India at once.

30/9/90.

I mean to retire altogether in March or April. It is no use coming out again, and I am tired of this separation. I am no longer as young as I was. . . . I liked much the description of your house. I think we shall be happy in it.

By the beginning of November he had changed his plan. He was going to ask for nine months' furlough from February'1,

## *India Called Them*

1891, so that it would be possible to come out again for the following winter: "I won't come out again if you finally disapprove." Annette wanted Henry desperately. "Dear Henry," she had answered one of his earlier letters, "feelings must rule sometimes by right of being right." But Annette knew, better perhaps than Henry himself, what a final adieu to India would mean to him. She wrote: "One cannot, perhaps, sever so long a connection with India except at leisure." She liked his position as President of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, as a recognition by Europeans of his work. She welcomed the idea of furlough, as a means of getting more money from Government. So it was settled between them that Henry should come home on furlough as soon as he had finished with the Asiatic Society and delivered his Presidential Address on February 3rd. He arranged to sail from Karachi in the second half of February 1891. There can never have been much doubt in Annette's mind that he would go out again.

Meanwhile Henry struggled with the preparation of his Presidential Address: emptied the house at Alipur of furniture, for whether he returned or not he would not need so large a house again; and did a characteristic rescue of a German sailor boy stranded at Birbhum<sup>1</sup> about a hundred miles north-west of Calcutta.

From Alipore, November and December 1890.

The Asiatic Society Address still troubles me but I have written the exordium and collected the materials for the rest. I feel that I have a good deal to say, but the best way of saying it is always a puzzle to me. Style is the dress of thoughts according to Lord Chesterfield, and we should not let them go out without it. I wish I had a Worth to clothe mine for me.

. . . . .

Ramyad has been busy packing. We have put up the two Buddhas. They are heavy and you will be startled by the size of the boxes. . . . I have packed four more boxes in addition to seven sent already. . . . I am packing all your letters. . . . The house is quite bare of furniture

<sup>1</sup> This was the station at which Sir William Hunter, a younger contemporary of Henry's, began, in a stay from 1863 to 1866, the book which made his early reputation, *The Annals of Rural Bengal*.

### *Henry's Last Station*

and so in Mr. Buckland's phrase I ride at single anchor. . . . It is the size of the Buddha boxes which appals me. . . .

Yesterday I drew out the children's savings banks deposits, including poor Herman's, and will send them home to you for re-investment next month. It is a pity that the rupi is no longer one and eightpence. The children's 1047 rupis yields only £77-5-0.

The two Buddhas were marble images—once painted but now white—which came originally from Burma and stood on the stair landings at Dilkusha, Henry's Alipur house. They were subsequently at The Croft, Eastbourne; at Henry's Surrey home, Pitfold; and at the cottage at Avebury, Wiltshire, once belonging to his son. They now look south across the lawn at Tuggal Hall, Chathill, Northumberland. Though less than three feet high they are, as Henry said, surprisingly heavy—needing three or four men to carry them.

From Birbhum, September 1890.

I am not sorry that I had an opportunity of seeing this place which has been rendered classical by the genius of a Hunter. . . . I shall be here till the end of the week. When I go down, I am to take with me a German boy of the name of Maxse Persel, who appears to have run away from his ship and who wandered up here of all places in the world. He has been staying with the McKennas and I could not refuse to take him down. Indeed I offered to do so. I will put him on board a Hamburg liner if possible. . . .

From Alipore, October 1890.

Max Persel went away yesterday in the Hochheiner for Hamburg. I paid Rs. 60 to the Captain for him and hope to receive it from the father in Munich. I could not help taking him down to Calcutta and trying to get him a ship but I am glad he is off my hands.

Henry, having delivered himself of his Presidential Address on February 3rd, made his way across India, and in due course followed the Buddhas and Max Persel home. He travelled this time all the way round from Karachi to Liverpool, and reached Eastbourne at the end of March. There he saw for the first time the house which Annette had taken for him and the family on the day when he had last expressed a desire to settle near Edinburgh. There he set himself at once to a new task—of learning at the age of 54 to ride a bicycle.

Neither Henry nor The Croft was well suited to this enterprise.

### *India Called Them*

Henry, while physically strong and untiring, was not clever with his hands and feet: "I am delighted to think," he once wrote to Annette, "that my children have your hands and not my clumsy ones." The only place in The Croft premises where he could practise was a sloping kitchen garden path about thirty feet long; down this Henry hopped behind his steed day after day, jumped on and lurched off into an apple tree on one side or a gooseberry bush on the other side. The sympathetically observing children could only be thankful that at least it was a safety bicycle and not a penny-farthing ordinary. Only two or three years before in Calcutta one of these children at a gymkhana had watched a bicycle race in which all but one of the vehicles was an ordinary; he had noted with a sense of unfairness that the one small safety bicycle was expected to give the rest a long start; he had barely been able to believe his eyes when the safety, overcoming its handicap, swept past to easy victory.

Henry by 1891 had at least a safety cycle, though with cushion, not pneumatic, tyres. And dogged did it at last. For midsummer day Annette's diary recorded that at 2 a.m. she made H. B.'s tea for him and at 3 a.m. saw him off into space on a cycle. Henry that summer travelled the length and breadth of England, descending battered upon friends who bound his wounds. He brought his steed with him to the Scottish holiday which the whole family spent mainly in Grantown-on-Spey. But at last the time came for him to return for his last station in India. Annette saw him off from the Albert Dock at the end of October.

He sent home his usual verbal sketches of fellow-passengers: Cotton (Sir Henry to be) "as vigorous as ever"; Wingate "as modest as he is clever and his wife is very nice too"; Lord Borthwick "very shy and plebeian looking"; a doctor's wife "a clever lady who has been to Iceland etc. and talks brightly about Tolstoi, Rudyard Kipling and the nature of woman"; a fellow-civilian who was "a wild Irishman but hardly a Home Ruler," for as Henry conceded he was an Ulsterman and Episcopalian. But this was Henry's twelfth or thirteenth voyage and the glow was off it. "The gorgeous East no longer attracts me."

On reaching India Henry found that his last station was not to be Calcutta. His place there had been wanted for another:

## *Henry's Last Station*

29/11/91.

Rampini had nothing to do with my transfer. It was made in the interest of Luttman-Johnson. His wife was Mrs. Stack and did not want to go back to Shillong on account of painful associations. She is a great friend of the Elliots. The High Court, however, objected to Luttman-Johnson getting a judicial appointment as he had chosen the executive line. So the job fell through and then they had not the honesty I suppose to cancel my transfer.

Thus Henry for the last of his thirty-five years of service to India was sent to the backwoods again, though not to the place at first proposed for him.

29/11/91.

I am not to go to Rajshahi after all. I have been offered Murshidabad instead and all my friends have advised me to take it. There are barracks where I can get rooms, it is near Calcutta, is an interesting district, and has no outstation like Maldah.

The district of Murshidabad, though nearer to Calcutta than Rajshahi, was not very near. Its capital, Berhampore, where Henry took up his solitary quarters in the barracks, was twelve miles from any railway.

1/12/91.

Berhampore is a very awkward place to get to. I started from Howrah at 7-30 a.m. yesterday and did not get here till 9-30 p.m. The Nulhatty State Railway is the most primitive thing in railways that I have ever seen. It has no fences, no station houses, and it takes three hours and ten minutes to do  $27\frac{1}{2}$  miles. It conveys you to Azimganj and then you have to cross the Bhaginutty in a ferry-boat and drive 12 miles.

But Henry's friends rallied round him. Alicia Allen in Calcutta, wondering to Annette what Henry had done about house linen and such things, offered with delight to do anything she could for him. His old khitmutgar and several other servants were waiting for him and all ready to go with him to the Mofussil. The Ranee Surnamoye sent a carriage and relays of horses for the last stage of his journey.

And Henry as always was determined to enjoy his fate.

1-7/12/91.

I think I shall like Berhampore. The work is light and the station is open and pretty. There is also the glamour of antiquity about

### *India Called Them*

Murshidabad. . . . I have got very good quarters in the barracks here, looking on the parade ground. They are really healthier and pleasanter than any house I could get here and I pay only Rs. 20 (twenty) a month for them. For this I have three fine rooms with two bathrooms &c. and godowns for the servants.

After all, as Henry wrote in another letter, "absence from you and the children is such a wrench that I really don't mind what part of Bengal I am in, provided that I can economise."

Economy was certainly called for. The expense of transporting and establishing Annette with her brood in England was great, and now school bills began to come in. The rupee exchange was going from bad to worse. Henry arrived in India owing a large debt to his bankers, Grindlay's. He found himself with the Alipur house upon his hands; it stood empty and one plan after another for finding a tenant failed.

Economy was called for, but Henry never economized at the cost of others. He continued to send £5 notes to his surviving sister Phemie, and Annette backed them by a monthly parcel from Eastbourne. Phemie, like Henry, had come to believe that death closes all, and though she liked his gifts she wanted even more his letters. On Maggie's death she had written:

10/10/90.

Eternity is in human hearts alone. We will never see each other again. The thought of death brings no consolation. It is a sad and terrible human calamity and the grave closes over all our endeavours. But the world is beautiful still and nature's charms never cease.

Now thanking Henry for a gift that would mean to her a warm winter coat Phemie went on:

29/3/92.

Will you write me sometimes? How much I prize a letter. . . . I wish I could write something worth reading—birds and flowers, nests and young ones.

Henry did write and the old breach between these two was healed.

In economy one of the purposes of the bicycle became apparent. From his earliest days in India Henry had always had horses to ride and drive; more than thirty years before his brother and sisters, in their bankrupt home, had felt the exaltation of having

### *Henry's Last Station*

a brother who drove his own buggy. Now in his last station Henry did without horseflesh entirely, without the coachmen, syces, and grass-cutters of his middle days. He arranged with a *ticca gharry* to drive him to his Court for Rs. 10 a month, took his bicycle on the roof, and rode back on it at the end of the day. Later he dispensed even with the *ticca gharry*, rode both ways, and saved the Rs. 10 a month.

These proceedings were not free from trouble. Henry wrote to his, one hopes, sympathetic son, how bicycling home one evening he had experienced a difficulty, for it had become obvious that the Treasury Guard at the barracks proposed to salute him. "However I am so far proficient now that I am able to take my right hand off the handle and gravely return their salute." As his proficiency and the heat of India grew, he essayed even bolder flights. "Yesterday morning," he reported to his daughter Letty, "I tried if I could ride the bicycle, holding an umbrella in one hand, and I managed to get round the square, but the steering is a little difficult." Henry decided that it was too difficult and took to the *ticca gharry* again for hot mornings. "The natives are much interested," wrote Henry on another occasion, "and I mount my steed under much observation."

The bicycle became the companion of many expeditions. On it Henry went to Bhasrapur to the house of Nanda Kumar and reported to his younger daughter Tutu how he had been received by Kumar's descendant with royal honours, as champion of his ancestor. "He had a red cloth laid down, arches with the word welcome inscribed upon them, sepoy on guard, musicians over the gateway." One can only hope that Henry steered straight below the music.

On the bicycle Henry visited the battlefield of Plassey, and in the village hall on a stool provided by an obliging ryot, sat and conversed with the assembled grey-beards about the battle.

3/2/92.

I was interested to find that they knew something about it. One man enthusiastically said that Mir Madan's fame would last as long as the world. They then diverged to more pressing matters and begged me to ask the Collector to make bigger water passages in the embankment that they might get water for their crops. During the parley one man brought in his hand two round sweetmeats and offered to fetch



### *India Called Them*

more. I ate the two and washed them down with two glasses of water from the sacred Bhagirathi.

On the same faithful steed Henry went to see the grave of Warren Hastings' first wife and baby daughter at Cassimbazaar. His brother Allie had been stationed there more than thirty years before and had been instrumental in getting the grave put in order. Now Henry reported to his daughter Letty.

13/12/91.

The little graveyard is disused now and overgrown with jungle so that I stepped about with caution and was glad when I could jump on to a flat tomb stone and so see that there was no cobra lying in wait for me. Mrs. Hastings' tomb is in a sort of alcove and when I got inside of it I had a pleasant surprise. A dove fluttered hastily out as if it had been caught by surprise, and I looked round and there in a corner of the inside ledge running round the alcove was her nest with two beautiful snow-white eggs in it. I thought that Mrs. Mary Hastings and her daughter would have liked such an inmate of their resting-place.

Henry, the gentle-hearted, filled his children's growing minds continually with pleasant thoughts and images. To Letty he wrote a few months later.

17/4/92.

I wish you could see the beautiful trees here. . . . I am always struck with the greenness and freshness of the trees in Bengal even under a blazing sun. It always makes me think of a strong character which remains pure and beautiful in the midst of evil surroundings because it draws strength and refreshment from sources below the surface.

To his son Willie he sent some Greek "in return for yours. The passage is perhaps worth all the rest of the Bible. It is curious how in the most famous books in the world it is only a few passages here and there that really live." (Alas! the enclosure is lost and there is no recovering now which of his many gifts of thought to his son this was.)

To Letty again he wrote:

17/5/92.

On the way out to Murshidabad I saw an interesting sight. This was a number of Sonthils travelling home from the tea districts.

### *Henry's Last Station*

There were women and children among them and some of the men had bhangis like milkmen, at each end of the bhangi there hung a flat basket and in one was their rice, blankets etc., and in the other and keeping the balance true was a child or it might be a couple of children. It was so funny to see a little child sitting so gravely in the middle of the scale as if he was so many seers of goods.

Letty was now rising 15—a clever creature once tempestuous, now tender, the eldest child, on whom above all Henry's hopes of new companionship and interests were set. Henry always remembered her birthday exactly; he was often vague about the others.

13/6/92.

Isn't Letty's birthday on the 10th July? What an old young lady she has become.

While pursuing the new and difficult art of the bicycle, Henry in his last station had recourse also to a very old friend—the concertina. He had consoled himself with this in his first lonely years in India. During an earlier absence from Annette—in 1886—he had asked her if she could find the concertina and send it out to him; she had then begged him not to press his request: "the concertina died before my time and I have not shed a tear for it." But apparently it had been discovered and now Henry renewed his plea.

11/1/92.

If my Concertina has not been sold I think I should like to have it sent out to me along with some sacred and other music for the Concertina. It would not cost much to send it and I really think that it would be a solace to me sometimes in my lonely hours after dinner. I cannot read much. If then you don't mind, will you kindly tell the music man (Hargraves, is it, in Terminus Road) to put the Concertina into repair and send it out to me.

Annette and Hargraves did their part and Henry almost at once got his concertina. Whether he ever mastered it even as imperfectly as the bicycle or the typewriter is not established.

As the children grew older, fresh problems arose about their religious education. Annette had won her point about sending them regularly to Sunday service, but Henry was clear, and she did not resist this, that they should not be made members of any church in childhood. "I am glad," he wrote, "that the children

### *India Called Them.*

cannot swallow the Bible wholesale. . . . I wish our children could do without cramming scripture and I am glad to hear that Letty resists confirmation. . . . Could you not get our children excluded from examination in scripture?" Henry's agnosticism hardened, in place of softening, with the years.

22/5/92.

The more I see and think over the matter, the more difficult do I find it to be to discover any *modus vivendi* by which believers and unbelievers can get together about these matters. It is not only the facts of the Bible that are wrong. The whole scheme of the Christian Religion gets more and more unintelligible to me. . . . I like the music and the tone of the "Rock of Ages" but can I for a moment cheat myself into the idea that I believe what is being sung? . . .

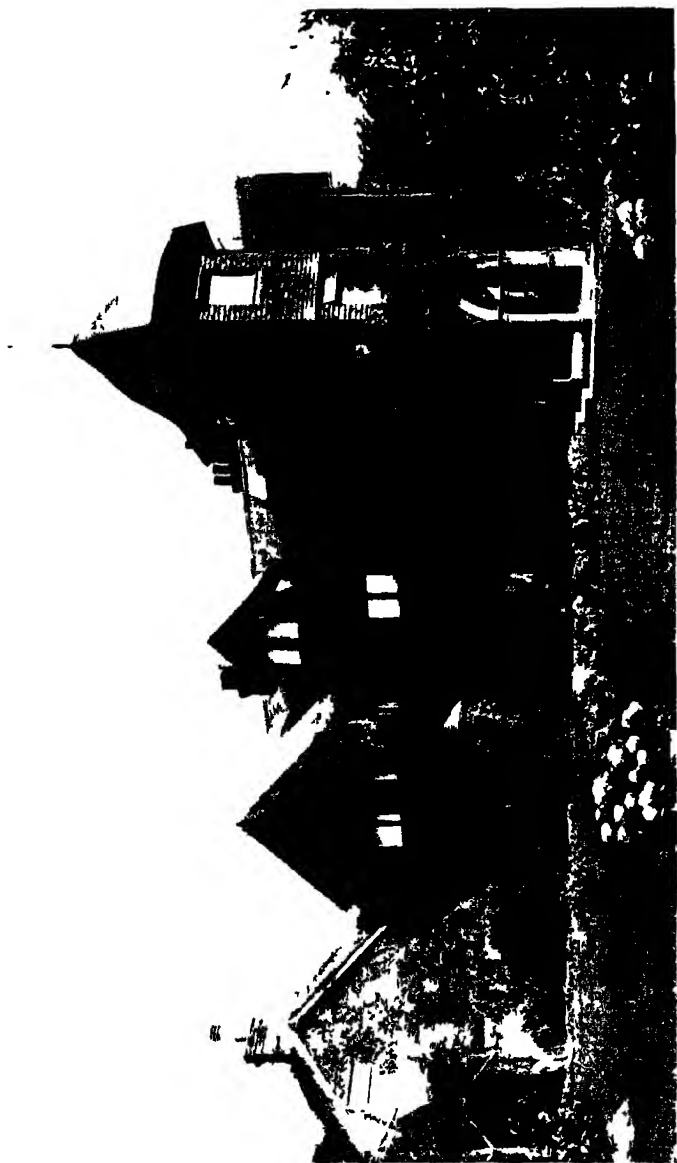
What appals me sometimes is the hollowness that pervades public and private life. We profess loyalty to the throne and are republicans at heart. We profess Christianity and the bulk of us are sceptics or atheists. When shall we always recognise that "clean and sound dealing is the honour of a man's nature?" Surely it must be very deleterious to us all to go on saying one thing and believing another. Is there at the present day—except for Gladstone—a single pious politician or a pious philosopher or writer. . . .

A worthy Scotch Bishop used to comfort himself and his friends by saying that things would go on as they had formerly, that the world would continue to be governed by the wisdom of God and the foolishness of man.

But alas! the wisdom of God seems so very inactive and the foolishness of man so terribly in the ascendant. Macaulay brushes away Southey's reliance on the mercy of God. He says: "The signs of the times, Mr. Southey tells us, are very threatening. His fears for the country would decidedly preponderate over his hopes, but for his firm reliance on the mercy of God. Now as we know that God has once suffered the civilised world to be overrun by savages and the Christian religion to be corrupted by doctrines which made it for some ages almost as bad as Paganism, we cannot think it inconsistent with his attributes that similar calamities should befall mankind."

This letter of Henry's was written in 1892, before world wars and their sequel of moral collapse.

Reflection on what he did not believe naturally was accompanied in Henry by examination of what he did believe and of the rules by which he lived.



*Pusfold, Hindhead, as rebuilt by Annette*



## Henry's Last Station

29/3/92.

You referred the other day to Foster's Essays and my admiration for them. I was asking myself the other day what special good I got from him and I answered myself that there was one passage in the Essay on Decision of Character which I thought had done me good. That is when he speaks of the folly of a man's not seizing with a strong hand the actualities of his situation and making the best of them, but lamenting that if his age or his circumstances had been different he might have done something. I think that passage impressed upon me the folly of "greeting over spilt milk" and the wisdom of trying again and doing the best in one's present circumstances. I think that all I have ever done, and it has been little enough, has been due to my forgetting the things behind. Sir James Mackintosh tells a story of some man who never could play whist well, because in place of attending to the game before him he was lamenting the errors he had made in the last hand.

In accord with this principle, Henry one Sunday reviewed with cheerfulness his failure to win professional advancement.

13/3/92.

I have enjoyed my forenoon reading the Greek New Testament and Macaulay's Life. I think I see a purpose in my life unrolling itself. The unconscious element has been at work and I have fulfilled my destiny more than I used to think. If I had got into the High Court I think I would only have done work which many others could do as well or better. But if I retire I may be able to write a good History of Bengal or to throw light on Indian Criminal Jurisprudence or (if we take a house in the country and pose as public-spirited citizens) we may go into Parliament as an Indian Member.

The History of Bengal rather than Parliament was Henry's line, even if it had been constitutionally possible for him to go there as one member with Annette.

26/3/92.

I think that when I retire I shall write a History of Bengal. That will give me occupation for ten years if I live so long.

He was to live for more than thirty-seven years after he wrote this letter, and to find occupation, not exactly in a History of Bengal, but in other writing and study in which "we" were always working together. In one of his *Calcutta Review* articles Henry had advocated the study of India's past as a service to be

### *India Called Them*

done for her future. This was the service to which he gave himself wholly when his official life was over.

Meanwhile Henry carried on with the daily round for his last days of service as an official. "The High Court," he reported more than once to Annette, "are wonderfully civil to me." "I never trouble them now and they thanked me the other day for a full and carefully constructed report on jurisdiction." Henry's work in this last station was relatively light, though every now and again came a big case of the kind "which gets between me and my sleep." Almost the last of his big cases arose out of a dispute between some Ranees and a firm of Indigo planters about a piece of land.

24/7/92.

It is a wonderful case. . . . Both sides admit that there was a riot and a man killed, and that the name of this man was Masahib Khan. But both claim the murdered man as their servant and both produce books and witnesses in support of their assertion. I think I see pretty clearly where the truth lies and if the jury do not and convict the wrong side, it will be a cause celebre and so a *reductio ad absurdum* of the jury system. I am nearly but not quite wicked enough to hope that the jury will convict the wrong side so that I can go up to the High Court with a reference and an exposé. . . . I have never had so elaborate a tissue of lies in all my Indian experience.

Inevitably Henry was proposing to take the unpopular line.

31/12/92.

You know that I am not favourably disposed to Indigo Planters. . . . But in this case although the manager is a fool, and there has been harsh and inconsiderate treatment of the ryots, there is no doubt that the murder was committed by the ryots and not by the factory people. Still I have no doubt that popular sympathy will be with the ryots and it is likely enough that I shall be bitterly abused in the native papers and, what to me is worse, lauded by the Anglo-Indian press. But I think you know that I shall not be greatly moved by these things, and that, to use the words of Clive, "I can go through everything with pleasure so long as I can with truth and without vanity apply to myself the words of Horace: *Justum et tenacem propositi virum*," etc. I am afraid this sounds like boasting but it is only for you.

Henry spent his last year of service as a single man in barracks,

### *Henry's Last Station*

but he was not without society. At first, feeling unable to give dinners in return, he felt shy of accepting dinner invitations, but he salved his social conscience by making a present of badminton nets and bats to the local club. Later, when he had paid off his debt to Grindlay's, he acquired a new cook and began to give dinners himself, even at the cost of having to spend the evenings after them in playing whist. "Let that be counted among my labours."

He made particular friends with an engineer and his family who had some Indian blood in them. "I enjoyed your chocolates immensely and so did the Livesey children." Henry, with other childlike qualities, always had a sweet tooth and Annette kept him supplied. "Your delightful parcel arrived this morning. Many many thanks. I was so glad to get the chocolate. I don't have tiffin and I would often like a bit of chocolate."

Henry interested himself in the differences of demeanour between those of the mixed family who in their complexion showed much and those who showed little of their Indian blood. The former were shy and retiring as if conscious of their colour; the latter took the lead. Their father in return expressed interest in Henry's religious opinions and sent him books which Henry received doubtfully, fearing that they would be too evangelical. But he found them better reading than he expected; Henry, though firmly agnostic, never ceased to be interested in religion or became unwilling to read sermons.

He went to visit an English lady married to an Indian to whom she had borne ten children.

31/5/92.

She is all alone in Murshidabad among the Mahomedans, but seems to maintain her place very well. She is very big and blonde while her husband is an insignificant looking black man, who however seems well disposed and is an excellent billiard player. . . . I asked him in the intervals of his strokes if his children were Christians or Mahomedans. He said, neither; he was leaving them to form their own opinions.

One would like to know how far the billiard break proceeded after this searching interruption.

He paid an occasional visit to Calcutta, with one very old friend went to the Indian Museum to study its display of



## *India Called Them*

meteoric stones, and reported to his younger daughter a rather surprising ambition. "I told Dr. Crombie that my two great ambitions in life were to save a man from drowning and to find an aerolite." To the same daughter Henry described once another early ambition and the manner of its fulfilment. As the youngest child of a bankrupt household, he had gone about hoping that he might find a lost sixpenny bit. He had never had such luck as a child. At last as a man he had found some money and had left it lying, because he thought and hoped that someone else would find it to whom it would give more pleasure.

If it had been a book, Henry would not have left it. For always he was reading and telling Annette about one book after another: the life of Sir James Mackintosh, "a disappointing and disappointed man who never could quite make up his mind whether to devote himself to politics or literature . . . but he was a fine fellow for all that"; *The Pariah*, by Anstey, whose "opening chapter almost took my breath away for the author talked of Furreedpore and Murshidabad and told a story—true to fact of another place—of a Magistrate going to dine with an Indigo Planter and finding a ryot locked up in a godown"; Lady Hutchinson's Memoir of her husband Colonel Hutchinson, showing the tale of the Loathly Lady and Sir Gawaine realized in real life; the Life of Archbishop Whately by his daughter:

4/6/92.

He once said that when he married one of the first things that he and Mrs. Whately agreed on was that, if they should have children they never would teach them anything that they did not understand. "Not even their prayers, my Lord?" "No," he replied, "not even their prayers."

Henry went on writing as well as reading, exploiting the historic interest of Murshidabad. "All the natives think I am going to write a history of Murshidabad and are anxious to give me information but I shall not do more than write an article or two."

I have at last finished my second article on Murshidabad. . . . I fear you will say it is rambling and heavy, a sort of run-away brewer's dray or better still Maple or Lancaster's van and rumbling as well as rambling. But I can't do better.

## *Henry's Last Station*

He went on encouraging Annette to write.

I am glad that you have taken up your book again. But do not hope that it should pay. The object of writing a book is to liberate one's mind and to fulfil a duty.

So with daily work, reading and writing, and mild society, Henry's last year of his thirty-five slipped away. It did not go fast enough for him. "The time does not pass very quickly, in spite of all my historical researches." "Only eight months more to serve—hurrah," he wrote at the end of April. "I know that I shall get restless as the time of departure draws near," he wrote in July, less than six months from the end: "I am restless enough already, God knows, and long to be with you all. . . . It is quite possible that I may feel it impossible to stay on till the 16th January and that I may resign by the 15th November. . . . Exchange is so bad now that I do not gain much by staying on." As Henry played with the idea of leaving before the very end, so he played with the idea of getting Annette to share his last months of Indian service. She felt the attraction of that also. Henry enjoyed himself building castles in the air about this plan and what it would enable Annette to see, and suggesting a number of extremely improbable companions, including his brother-in-law James Mowatt. But expense, if nothing else, made that seem not worth while for her.

So Henry stayed alone and, when the time came, on January 14, 1893, he stepped out of India's service all but unnoticed, as quietly as he had stepped into it thirty-five years before, on the night when he heard the jackals howling on the tiger-haunted island of Saugor.

*To my Husband who set my feet upon the Persian way and  
has strewed it with open-hearted largesse of help and  
counsel.*

Dedication by Annette of her translation of  
Gulbadan's *Humayun-Nama*, November 1901.

*I am thankful that I have been privileged to see the birth-  
place of Akbar and the graves of Anarkali, Abul-Fazl,  
and Badayuni.*

Henry from Lucknow to Annette in Surrey,  
December 21, 1899.

*I feel grateful for having been allowed to live so long. . . .  
I shall not repine if now I have reached my term. . . . Not  
having been able to contend successfully with my con-  
temporaries, I am still less able to cope with the much  
cleverer and more highly equipped rising generation.*

Henry from Calcutta to his daughter Tutu in  
Surrey on his 63rd birthday.

*I don't always fall upon my feet. I sometimes fall upon my  
head, but then I am so constituted that I don't know the  
difference.*

Henry from Muradabad to his daughter Tutu in  
Surrey, December 11, 1899.

*I sometimes think that with your deafness, and my  
awkwardness and uncouthness, I am nearer to you on  
paper than in person, and so I go on writing interminable  
screeds to you.*

Henry from Calcutta to Annette in Surrey,  
January 7, 1900.

## Chapter XIX

### INDIA REVISITED

**H**ENRY leaving India, as he thought, for the last time in January 1893, did not travel direct to England. Twenty years before he had planned to give his brother David a jaunt to Italy to meet him as he returned for furlough. That plan had been disturbed by Annette: David, in place of stravaiging with lone Henry about the Continent, welcomed Henry and his new wife at Southampton. Now, twenty years after, Henry carried through the interrupted plan, invited David to meet him at Brindisi and, of course, paid all his expenses. As Henry wrote to Annette at the time, "David is a link with all my past and I cannot abandon or forsake him."

But equally, of course, Henry did not stay in Italy as long as he had planned; the pull of Annette and the children was too strong. After eight days spent in seeing Rome and other sights, Henry left David to enjoy the rest of the holiday alone, and arrived unexpectedly at Eastbourne in the last days of February, to begin his new life as a British householder, and to enjoy his children, and above all his eldest, Letty.

Fate had a cruel blow in store for him. Early in April Letty fell ill with what the doctors called influenza; in five days, on April 14th, three months short of being sixteen, she was dead. She had sat at Christmas for the Cambridge Local Examination. After her death it was announced that she had been the most successful of all the girl candidates, having gained both first-class honours and the prize for German.

The next year is one of the blankest in the record. Annette had not the heart to make many entries in her diary. Henry and Annette were always together, so there are no letters. From the loss of Letty two things followed.

First, the ill-fated "Croft" and Eastbourne were abandoned as soon as the four-year lease was up. Henry and Annette had long ago decided that they would not end their days in a town. The only question was where to settle in the country. This, after

### *India Called Them*

many searches in many directions, they settled finally with characteristic speed. In the spring of 1894 the fluctuating relations with Annette's sister Fanny, living with her husband James Mowatt in Hindhead in Surrey, were in a short summery phase. A house near by came into the market and Fanny telegraphed to Annette urging her to take it: the telegram said optimistically that the proceeds of one of the vineries would by themselves pay the rent. Henry, rising at 6.30 one morning, went to see this house; Annette followed the next day; two days later they signed a contract for purchase of Pitfold. This was a property of ten acres, 650 feet above the sea, with an old large garden and many outbuildings, including a picturesque barn which became in due course a billiard-room and dancing-room. The house itself had begun, in 1792, as little more than a cottage, but a front and a turret had been added to it, designed, it was said, by a former owner who had been a local hairdresser. Here Henry and Annette settled themselves at last; they made the garden really beautiful. Here on each side of the door leading to the garden the Buddhas reached a further station in their pilgrimage from Burma to Northumberland. Here Henry and Annette's two surviving children grew up, and brought their friends to enjoy the hospitality which Annette rejoiced to give. Here Henry once expressed his view of Mr. Bernard Shaw's *Candida* by burning the volume containing it solemnly upon the lawn.<sup>1</sup>

At Pitfold, it may be added, Mr. Bernard Shaw spent his honeymoon. One summer in 1895 when Henry and Annette, following a common Hindhead custom, decided to let their house furnished and go for a change elsewhere, there appeared as prospective tenant Miss Payne Townsend who, when arrangements had been completed, admitted gracefully that she planned to take up the tenancy as Mrs. Bernard Shaw. The episode brought Annette and Mr. Shaw together and they had much argument whose nature is indicated by the inscription on a copy of *The Perfect Wagnerite* which the author presented to her as "perhaps the cleverest lady and the wickedest in her opinions that I have ever met."

From Pitfold, in the days of the Suffragette Agitation, Annette

<sup>1</sup> This rite was described later by Henry's son William in his second book, *John and Irene: An Anthology of Thoughts on Woman*, being there attributed to the hero "John," who apart from this has nothing of Henry in him. Irene never was on sea or land.

## *India Revisited*

fought and lost the one political battle of her career since Stourbridge days. She became the local secretary, with boundless energy, of the National Women's League for Opposing Woman Suffrage. Like Beatrice Webb and others who for a while were in the same camp, Annette had never experienced any difficulty in having her way without a vote.

But such activities were only a ripple on Annette's main stream of life which, as a second consequence of Letty's death, flowed even closer to Henry's in pursuit of Indian studies. Henry suggested that Annette in her grief should fill her mind by learning Persian, and in her fifties she did so. Her first work in this language was to prepare a text and translation of the Humayun-Nama: this was the history of Humayun, eldest son and successor of Babur the Mogul conqueror of India, written in the sixteenth century by one of Babur's daughters, Gul-badan, or Lady Rosebody, as Annette liked to call her. Annette's dedication of this work, published when she was 60, was "To my Husband, who set my feet upon the Persian Way and has strewed it with open-hearted largesse and counsel."

After Persian, Annette proceeded to learn yet another Oriental language—Turki, and set herself to make a fresh translation of the Babur-Nama, Babur's own account of his life; this appeared in four sections, the last of them when Annette was all but 80. She interspersed in these major activities many articles, a translation of a charming collection of stories for her children written by a Persian lady—Bibi Brooke's *Key to the Heart of Beginners*, and a Persian fairy story which Andrew Lang included in his *Brown Book of Fairy Stories*. In all this Henry was an indispensable encourager, critic and assistant.

He himself had undertaken, not the History of Bengal, which he had expected to last ten years if he lived so long, but, at the request of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, the translation from Persian of the Akbar-Nama of Abul-Fazl; this was the history of Babur's grandson Akbar, the greatest of India's rulers. Its translation proved a terrific and tiresome undertaking, for Abul-Fazl spared neither himself nor his readers; he was a leading example of what Henry described as the common vice of Oriental historians: that none of them were able to get down to their subject "without a preliminary prance among the

## *India Called Them*

patriarchs." Abul-Fazl began his *History of Akbar* with Adam, and did not reach his actual hero till the second volume; he filled that largely with horoscopes of all the leading characters; he practised a style which was tortuous and obscure. Henry always alluded to the author to whom he gave the last twenty years of his working life as "the Owl."

With these Oriental studies, Henry and Annette were never short of happy occupation together. They lived both in Surrey and in by-gone India. Henry found in these studies an apt reason for seeing present India once more.

After six years in England he decided that he must visit India. He gave himself as objective of his journey, discovery and collection of manuscripts bearing on Indian history and literature, and particularly, if he could find it, another manuscript of the Gul-badan on which Annette was at work. Annette for her part saw that Henry's absence in India would give her a golden opportunity of rebuilding his house in Surrey. So on July 7, 1899, Henry set off from Southampton. Five days later Annette signed a contract for building work at Pitfold. The season was obviously better chosen for Annette's purpose of building than for Henry's purpose of travelling to India, but, as Henry often boasted, he was indifferent to the seasons. Setting out in his 63rd year for his Wander-Jahr in India, he wrote to Annette its justification:

S.S. *Arabia*, 7/7/99.

At least you can testify that my going out to India was no sudden fancy but the crown of long deliberation. I felt that it was the work that I was best fitted for and that it would be a sin, as Tennyson's Ulysses says, to spare myself and live in inglorious ease for a few years longer. I cannot study continuously now and I think I have given almost enough of my life to Abul Fazl, having as you know given four or five years of tolerably hard work to him. When I come back I think I shall take to gardening and to the calm serenity of an Indian summer. Of course, I may, as Cardinal Newman nobly says of himself, be under a strong delusion and be adopting as the right course what is not so. But I must follow the Gleam (vide Tennyson's poem) and do what I can do. Jowitt in his old age and after all his labours recorded that unless he did something more he must be held to have failed. And I too feel that unless I can rescue these records of Indian history, my life will have been more or less a blunder, as my poor father said to my mother not long before his sudden death.

### *India Revisited*

This opening letter dealt also with more practical affairs. "Tell Kate that I have filled the cheroot case to-day by buying a few Manilas from the steward." Thus Henry paraded his hard-won liberty to smoke. "You will be glad to hear that my balance at Grindlay's was £505 on 24 June." This certainly was for Henry at any time in his life a surprising figure, prompting further investigation.

S.S. *Arabia*, Marseilles, 13/7/99.

I am so glad that you do not in your heart disapprove of my going and that you sympathise with me. I have had a letter from Mrs. Goldie. She has come across an old journal of her mother's and has been struck by finding how much her mother loved her. We Northerners are so undemonstrative.

The balance at Grindlay's is all right. It is their own figure, but I can't quite realise how the balance has mounted up to £500.

S.S. *Arabia*, 14/7/99.

I am sorry to say that after all I find I am mistaken about my balance! The figures £505 are clear enough but they are on the wrong side of the book and my real balance in June was £137 and not £505. I feel much ashamed, but my comfort is that except in writing to you I have not acted as if I had £500 of a balance. . . . I have plenty of money with me for the voyage and for living in Bombay, and I have Rs. 850 or so in Calcutta and also a claim for more. So I shall do very well and now we shall say no more about money matters. It is not my strong point. . . .

Annette's response to this was to send £100 at once from her account to Grindlay's for Henry; while most grateful, he declared that he would not need it and he did not.

Henry, arriving at Bombay near the end of July, spent nearly four weeks there and then set out on his wanderings. They took him from one end to the other of northern India, from Umarkot in the west on the edge of the Rajputana desert to Calcutta in the east, from Lahore and Patiala in the north to Gwalior and Bhopal in the centre and Hyderabad in the south. To Umarkot Henry went, that he might see the birthplace of Akbar; to Gwalior, that he might drive out to Antari and see Abul Fazl's tomb. To Bhopal and Hyderabad he went as the guest of the Indian rulers of those States or of old Indian friends who were high in office there. The main part of his time he spent in the



### *India Called Them*

central region, between Jaipur and Ulwar west of Agra and Benares and Patna on the middle Ganges.

If money was not Henry's strong point, personal frugality combined with generosity to others was. Both qualities were illustrated on this pilgrimage. He travelled out second class, which gave him the chance that he might not otherwise have enjoyed of sitting at table opposite a fellow-passenger who never opened his mouth except to put his knife into it. He sent £2, as an old friend of her father's, to a young lady in distress. "She is a pretty girl but I think I would have done as much for her if she had been ugly. I am sorry for her as she is likely to become an orphan." And when he reached Bombay at the end of July he found a Temperance Hotel so cheap that, as he wrote, "I am almost afraid to tell you what I pay lest you should conclude that it is in the slums and not comfortable. But it is really quite good. . . ." That there were slums to be found in Bombay Henry knew well:

17/8/99

I feel sure that our native towns in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras are a disgrace. We choose the best sites, put grand buildings on them and huddle up all the rest. As if the body politic could flourish if any extremity thereof be left in dirt and squalor. The European quarter is like the electric light. It only throws into deeper shadow the unlighted places.

The Bombay Temperance Hotel cost Henry Rs. 2½ (3s. 4d.) a day for everything; he could have stayed a month for Rs. 60 (£4). When he reached Calcutta he managed to get taken for Rs. 3 (4s.) a day; in reporting this to his son he stressed the fact that though the address was Mango Lane, it was not really a lane at all but a broad street, and he passed on for the comfort of Annette that the *rules* of the house included a request that the residents will dress for dinner. Between Bombay and Calcutta pilgrim Henry lived chiefly in dak bungalows through the length and breadth of northern India, varied by being entertained on semi-royal terms by Indian friends. The dak bungalows cost him about Rs. 4 (5s. 4d.) a day. The entertainment cost him nothing but shame and the effort to keep up appearances.

In Rohilkund, as the guest of the Nawab's Prime Minister,

### *India Revisited*

his enjoyment of four quails for breakfast was marred partly by regret that Annette was not there to enjoy them even more, and partly by the fact that "three Khitmutgars or rather one Khansamah and two Khitmutgars bring the breakfast and stand over me while I eat it." He repayed this hospitality by taking infinite trouble and enlisting Annette's aid to find a school to which his host's boy might come in England.

31/10/99.

The boy is healthy and intelligent and his father's only fault with him is that he is somewhat playful. Poor eleven years old! He would fain have been a soldier, but it seems that is impossible. . . . I think it is a great risk sending a boy so young and I wonder what his mother thinks about it. I never see her. . . .

In Bhopal, Henry was one of a large gathering to meet the Viceroy.

Laurie's Hotel, Allahabad, 14/11/99.

I am actually going to Bhopal. I will see the Viceroy and so perhaps need not go to Simla and what is more to the point, I will please my wife which St. Paul says is the thing that husbands chiefly think of. I have written for Ram Yad but chiefly that I may get something done for his eyes, and I will have to engage a khitmutgar here for I cannot go to Bhopal absolutely servantless.

Bhopal, Central India, 24/11/99.

I arrived here this morning and was received by Abul Jebbar's nephew and secretary. A carriage and pair drove me to the camp, while an enormous shigram drawn by two camels on which rode two helmeted syces conveyed my poor little baggage. There is a street of tents and on one was my name. . . . Tomorrow comes Lady Curzon from Jhansi way, and fifteen minutes later comes the Viceroy from Jubbulpur. . . . Ram Yad is with me and I think that like his master he will have to take a back seat among all these gorgeous liveries. . . . The Doctor Missionary looked at his eyes and pronounced against an operation. . . . I shall let Ram Yad go home after a time. I am glad to have seen him and found that his eyes are better than I thought.

Bhopal, 27/11/99.

I am glad that I have come and I have seen much that is interesting but I should not like such another tamasha and all through I have felt sad that you and Tutu were not here instead of me. The thought

### *India Called Them*

that has always been arising is that viceroyal visits cause immense trouble and expense without effecting commensurate good.

Henry's pilgrimage involved many things that he delighted in more than *tamashas*. He had the delights of the collector's chase, of memorable sights and chance encounters, of contriving uncomfortable journeys, of being welcomed by old friends and revisiting old scenes, of seeing India from a new angle. He had the happy occupation of describing all this by letters to Annette and the children in Surrey.

Henry had the delight of the collector's chase. He did not find for Annette a new manuscript of Gul-badan's Humayun-Nama; the nearest he got to that was finding at Udaipur, in response to an advertisement, a manuscript described as Gul-badan's but in fact by another author. He had been going to telegraph success to Annette; he had to write instead of failure. Some places, notably Bombay which he described as a centre of Philistine commerce, he drew wholly blank for MSS., but he bought there some Persian printed books: "I have followed the example of whaling captains who, when they cannot get whales, fill up their ships with seals." In other places he was more fortunate. He was able to make up a good £100 worth of MS. and rare printed books for sale to the India Office. He brought others home for use at Pitfold.

Henry had the delight of memorable sights and chance encounters in a country where his mastery of languages made him almost everywhere at home. There was a polite old Mahomedan in a Bombay tram making room for Henry with the remark: "you are old and I am old so we should sit together"; Henry discovered the Mahomedan's age as "four twenties and two" and giving his own as "three twenties and two" was hailed as a *bacha*—no more than a boy. There was Victoria Garden, where a young Mahomedan came and sat by Henry and quite spontaneously sang an ode of Hafiz; he said he came from Lucknow to visit his brother—a tram conductor—but Bombay was a bad place and he would like to go back to Lucknow, only the railway fare was heavy; one wonders—it is not recorded—how much of the railway fare Henry volunteered. There was the Nawab of Amroha, who at first was suspicious of Henry as having no introductions and wished him to communicate with the police, but soon thawed, invited all the local notabilities to

### *India Revisited*

meet Henry and bring their MSS., and with his son-in-law actually took meals with Henry—"the first time that I have had the privilege of sitting down at table with Mohamedans." There was the breakwater at Back Bay, of which Henry never tired, "with Malabar Hill dipping her well-clothed foot into the waves, with the presence of men all round engaged in prayer to Mecca or to the setting sun to give pathos to the scene." There was the hospital in Jaipur where Henry's interest in all things human led him to watch an operation on a small boy for stone. There were burial-places and cemeteries galore; Henry had a passion for cemeteries and for noting the pathetic youthfulness of most who died in India. There was the Taj Mahal by moonlight, but "I never go to these places without feeling that it is a shame that I am seeing them all alone and wishing that the family could enjoy them too."

Henry had the delight of contriving uncomfortable journeys. He started from Bombay with a thirty-three-hour railway journey to Jaipur without sleeping accommodation. There was plague about and Henry at one junction, while lying down resting, was startled by a request to give his hand for examination; he was told for his comfort by a Parsee doctor that six people from Poona had lately been taken out of that train there, and that all six died within twenty-four hours. There were connections to be caught at four in the morning, and Henry's method of catching them was to sleep overnight in the station waiting-room. There were trains which Henry took with nothing on them but a third class, but the journey, he assured Annette of one such occasion, "is only a short one."

For much of Henry's pilgrimage there were no trains at all. He made many drives by pony carriage, of which one example may suffice.

I drove out to the ancient city of Amroha in a sort of char-a-banc or shigram drawn by one small pony. The little beast took me the whole distance (about 20 miles) in about four hours and it brought me back yesterday in less than four hours! We should have got sooner on Saturday if the cart had not capsized when about two miles from Amroha. The harness was bad and the part which held down the shafts suddenly broke. Up they went and I was tilted back into the road. Luckily neither I nor the driver nor the pony nor the

### *India Called Them*

cart sustained any damage—a piece of good fortune for which a passing traveller cried upon me to give thanks to God.

To reach another ancient city, Umarmkot, on the border of the Rajputana desert, Henry made first a “dreadfully slow railway journey” from Hyderabad to Shadapalli, and then a twenty-four-hour drive in a bullock-cart. He had meant to go in the same way across the desert to a railway, but was told that it would take six to ten days, that there was no water to be had, and there was famine in the land. So he returned on the route he came, but for speed substituted a camel for the bullock-cart.

I hope this will be my last experience of camel riding. It is well enough when the camel walks, but when he, or she, trots, the jolting is awful. Natives use the expression *shutuschi* to express cowardice and I realised the meaning of the expression on this journey. I never saw any beast so timid and so apt to shy as our camel. She would not pass a cart especially if the bullocks had bells and had to be led past. I thought of Gulbadan and the camel who had not seen civilisation for 70 generations.

Many travellers have described the discomforts of riding a camel. It needed someone like Henry to think of Gul-badan and to know that *shutuschi* means camelious. Henry's account continues.

We started at 4.45 p.m. and travelled by the moon and for an hour or so after it till 12. Then the camel men explained in broken Hindustani that they were tired and hungry and proposed putting up in a village. I agreed and we adjourned to a thana where the camel drivers represented that I was a military sahib. A benevolent soul lent me a charpoy and a rezai and I slept till 5.30 a.m. Then we started again and got to Shadapalli by 8.20 where I had a delicious bath and breakfast at the Guards (railway) running quarters. At 1.38 we started for Kothri, got there about 8 and saw the grand new bridge over the Indus. Then slept in the waiting room till 2.30 a.m. and went back to Lahore. We reached this at 10 a.m. on Friday, having started early on Thursday, after losing 20 minutes owing to hot box, i.e. an axle getting heated and smoking. I started off to the city to see my curiosity dealer, but only to find that he had gone to Ferozapore.

So Henry set out later the same day to Agra. This particular expedition meant four successive nights spent as follows:

### *India Revisited*

Tuesday—On a camel, returning from Umarkot with rest in a thana on a charpoy lent by a benevolent soul.

Wednesday—In Kothri station waiting-room till 2.30 a.m. and then in train to Lahore.

Thursday—In train to Lahore.

Friday—In train from Lahore to Agra.

Henry had no sleeping compartment and was nearly 63.

These delightfully uncomfortable journeys were diversified for Henry by many minor mishaps. Once he got out at the wrong station and in doing so left his courier bag with all his money hanging in the train; but with the aid of the telegraph and a pony carriage he caught up with his bag, to find the station-master at Benares making an inventory of its contents. On the same journey he forgot to put any shirts in his portmanteau. Twice when hanging out of the *ticca gharry* window to speak to the driver he caught his watch chain in the venetian blind of the door and Annette's locket disappeared into a slit, to be recovered by surgical operations on the carriage panels. Once his whisky flask leaked, through melting of the glue round the top, and the spirit got over his visiting cards; Henry baked them in the sun to get rid of the smell. Fortunately his sobriety was at all times beyond suspicion.

The blind old bearer, Ram Yad, could hardly lower but did not raise the average efficiency of the party. "He has got out of the way of serving," wrote Henry, "and has sent me off with a pair of pajamas without a string and without any change of towels. So I have been washing these in the hot water of my bath and drying them in the glorious Indian sunshine." When the need for keeping up appearances at Bhopal for the Viceroy was over, Henry parted with Ram Yad at Allahabad. "He was tearful, but I am sure he was glad to go home."

All these doings Henry reported to his daughter Tutu, with a fitting final comment. "I don't always fall upon my feet. I sometimes fall upon my head, but then I am so constituted that I don't know the difference."

Henry had the delight of being welcomed by old friends and revisiting old scenes. At Bankipur he had the pleasant surprise of finding their old khansamah Ali Jan installed as khansamah of

### *India Called Them*

the dak bungalow, still cherishing the photograph of the family at Keavil, which he had got framed by the old joiner Punnoo. Ali Jan's wife had once benefited greatly by a medicine advised by Annette; Henry asked Annette to send out the prescription again as it had been lost. Bankipur was the nearest thing to a settled home—just three years together with their children—that Henry and Annette had known in India. Nearly twenty years later it was still full of old friends and their children; Henry looked them all up and sent messages of love to Annette.

In Calcutta, where Henry arrived on Christmas Eve, the first thing that he saw on crossing the bridge was the "glimmering square" of the tablet which a dozen years before Annette had put up to those lost in the shipwreck of the *Sir John Lawrence*. He took a walk to Ballygunge and suddenly in fog came on the linden tree outside the old house on which the children used to climb; the Ballygunge Cricket Club found Henry out and their President brought him a beautiful bouquet and a subscription book. He dined with an old Indian friend, Amir Ali, married to an English lady: "it is a 19th century edition of Othello and Desdemona and so Othello is a man of books and Desdemona has intellect and training and holds her own." He travelled from Calcutta to Ranaghat in Nuddia to see another old friend of a different sort—James Monro and his medical mission.<sup>1</sup>

15/1/00.

We sat down some 16 to dinner. . . . There are some three dispensaries attached to the mission and the men's and women's hospital. Monro is certainly doing a good work . . . but it would not suit us. It is as well perhaps that Monro is under no delusion as to the prospect of Christianising the people. His view is that he and all Christians have been commanded to deliver their message, and when they have done this they are justified. The responsibility of accepting or rejecting the message lies with the hearers.

Mrs. Monro is an invalid but she still does all the housekeeping from her couch. She desired to be most kindly remembered to you and so did her husband. . . . He looks well and strong—white-haired and rubicund of visage. I came away touched and interested but still with the feeling that there was no rest for the sole of the feet of either you or me in Ranaghat. We work our work, they theirs, as Ulysses says.

<sup>1</sup> See Note to Epilogue below, p. 393.

## *India Revisited*

Finally, Henry in this pilgrimage had the delight of seeing India as he had always at heart wanted to see India, coming not as an alien ruler but as a wandering scholar. He saw many places that he had never seen before and he saw them all differently. He had leisure in his wanderings for many thoughts. "They have a brownish tinge, to borrow an expression of Gibbon in his autobiography, yet they are salutary and I think it is good for one to be alone with one's thoughts sometimes." So he wrote to Annette just before Christmas Day in Lucknow.

21/12/99.

Of all things I think we should not be afraid of being alone with our thoughts. It is then that we see life as it really is and with the blinkers off. . . .

To change the subject and to give a brighter turn to our thoughts, don't you think that you and I might write together . . . a life of Akbar? . . . Your pen is lighter and brighter than mine and could do the descriptive parts. I would work down below in the mine and bring up the gold for you to polish and to give a proper setting so that it may be worthy of a Queen's wrist.

For the present I have ended my Ulysses-like wanderings. . . . I am thankful that I have been privileged to see the birth-place of Akbar and the graves of Anarkali, Abul Fazl, and Badayuni.

In thinking his own thoughts Henry never ceased to think with and for Annette and his children.

To Annette he wrote, of course, continually about her literary work. He encouraged her about the rebuilding of Pitfold:

5/8/99.

I am sure to like the alterations; I have always said that all your alterations were improvements. I am sorry that the house is in such a bad state, but with you at the helm all will get right in time. What fear of storm says Sadi when Noah is the pilot.

He fell in at once with a suggestion that Pitfold should be transferred from him to his son, though in the end this was not done. He gave sage, if cryptic, advice about the bees, whose malpractices of various kinds were one of Annette's minor worries.

21/7/99.

I am so sorry to hear that you got stung. There is a proverb you know about one man's being able to steal a horse and another not



### *India Called Them*

being able to look over the hedge. But the moral of this is not always so much considered. This certainly is that the second man should not look over the hedge.

And he made a characteristic apology for the length of his letters.

7/1/00.

I feel sometimes that with your deafness, and my awkwardness and uncouthness, I am nearer to you on paper than in person, and so I go on writing interminable screeds to you.

To his daughter Tutu, besides recording his mishaps and his occasional good deeds (such as writing his name at Government House), he wrote approving her proposal to go to Somerville. "For myself," he added, "not having been able to contend successfully with my contemporaries, I am still less able to cope with the much cleverer and more highly equipped rising generation."

To his son Will at Oxford he wrote commending the son's projected visit to Toynbee Hall; he revealed that he had once been sufficiently interested to go there himself and had been puzzled by the porter's pronunciation of "Balliol House" there. "I hope you will be touched by it, and indeed I am sure you will." Balliol led Henry's mind to Magdalen and so to a plan for pleasing Annette through her son.

In Macmillan's Magazine for 1893 there is a delightful poem by the Warden of Magdalen entitled *Virgilium Vidi*, his Virgil being Tennyson. I saw some time ago that the Warden had collected his verses and published them. If the *Virgilium Vidi* is among them, as it is almost sure to be, would you please buy the book and present it to your mother in my name. If it is not among them, please get her a copy of the Macmillan I have referred to, or if this is impossible copy out the poem for her in your neatest of hands and send it to her. . . . Remember what a success we scored with "Arcady."

In their childish years Henry had filled his children's minds continually with pleasant images of beauty in nature. As they grew older he shared with them the beauty, the interest and the wisdom that he found in books.

"Among the good gifts that one receives," he wrote to his daughter Tutu at this time, "that of the introduction to a fine poem or a good book surely deserves special remembrance. I

### *India Revisited*

always remember how in the remote district of Bankipur a barrister, Mr. Collinson, now I believe in South Africa, first brought to my notice Swinburne's wonderful chorus about the Spirit of Man in Atalanta in Calydon. In the beginning of his meditations Marcus Aurelius gives a curious list of his intellectual debts, but I do not remember that he mentions books. They were not so common in his day, and oral instruction was more prevailing."

"Macaulay," Henry wrote at the same time to his son, "quotes from Swift: No man ever made a bad figure in life who understood his own talents or a good one who didn't. And Macaulay adds that every day gives us fresh proof of the truth of this pregnant maxim. But alas! this self-knowledge is about the last thing one learns and generally only when it is too late and when one has played one's part. That you may know the saying before it is too late, I quote it to you, but the application must rest with yourself."

This son, during part of Henry's wander-year, was in Norway on a reading party by a fishing river. Henry wrote:

I hope that you will enjoy Norway and, if you don't catch many fish, you may console yourself with the happiness of the fish in having escaped your snares. Swift said that when he was a boy he caught a trout and that he had just brought it to the top of the water, when it broke away and escaped. He says the bitterness of the disappointment followed him all through life. A larger and more Christian view might have led him to sympathy with the fish and to rejoice at its escape. As Wordsworth sings,

One lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,  
Taught both by what she shows, and what conceals,  
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride  
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels.

Henry himself never fished or hunted or shot for pleasure.

*As happy as so old a person can be.*

Henry to Annette about Jemima at 88,  
June 8, 1883.

## Chapter XX

### FULL CIRCLE

**H**ENRY left India for the last time in the middle of February 1900. Coming all the way by sea to London, stopping at Italian ports, he was forty days on the journey. He reached England from India for the last time on April 2, 1900.

He and Annette had still nearly thirty years to live, but how they lived them does not come into this story, except in briefest summary.

Henry and Annette saw their daughter Jeannette married to the son of their friend and fellow-scholar of the Indian Service, to a college friend of their own son Will. They saw that son not marrying, pursue what Henry might have thought as devious a course as that of his own father of Inzievar—through the Bar, social service, journalism, the Civil Service, university administration. Once that son, going to Germany in an Oxford vacation for solitary reading, urged his father to come with him. "I should like to go," wrote Henry to Annette; "I think I know my daughter but I should like to know more of my son." But, indeed, Henry understood his son well enough.

By their son, Henry and Annette were introduced to the joys of motoring, in its early experimental days. Henry did not take to it. Annette enjoyed it immensely, and never found any journey too long or its adventures alarming. It was a form of companionship with her children in which, as many years before she had noted about riding, she did not feel the disadvantage of her deafness.

This disadvantage grew upon her, till she turned it into an advantage. In the first years at Pitfold she had used speaking-tubes, including a five-tailed monster that spread itself for general conversation over the dinner table. At 60 she decided to learn lip-reading as an alternative. At 70 conversation with her came to involve writing to her, but it never ceased, on her part, to be very lively conversation. If Annette was in a room she was part of any conversation there; she was utterly undefeated by deafness. And one of the advantages of written conversation

### *India Called Them*

was that she could take it away with her, and enjoy it twice over. In her 86th year, attending a graduation party at the London School of Economics where the Prince of Wales of that time was the principal guest and Jelly d'Aranyi played, she came away with a complimentary remark signed "Edward P."

There was a moment when she was threatened with loss of all communication. She was all but completely deaf, and one eye had long been completely clouded. Then the other eye began to go. Annette, little short of 80, went with cheerfulness and complete confidence into an operation for cataract which must mean that for two or three days at least no message could reach her. She had survived at 73 a major abdominal operation. She had no doubt of as good a result this time and her faith was justified.

Henry and Annette saw the First World War in and out together. Early in the war Henry, at 78, volunteered to be a Special Constable in London, and made exhausting journeys to and from Hindhead to guard a gas-works near Shepherd's Bush, till the kindly authorities told him that, with others coming forward, he was no longer needed. But they did not retire him; they placed him on the reserve and requested him to retain his baton. So he settled down with Annette, at first in Pitfold, then, as domestic staff ebbed away, in the gardener's cottage. There they read many books together; among others they recorded the reading together in 1916 of the *Meditations of Marcus Aurelius*. There they kept on working, together and separately, Henry at the interminable Owl, Annette at her new translation of the Babur-Nama from the Turki text.

With this work they were always content: happy to see friends and children, not unhappy when alone. They consumed the smoke of their advancing years themselves.

Henry's translation of Abul Fazl was finished in 1921. Thereafter, at 84, he took no new task, but occupied himself with errata, index and addenda. Annette's translation of the Babur-Nama was published in four sections, making two stout volumes, in 1922, when she was 80. She set herself at once to fresh writing tasks, and was preparing a revision of the Babur-Nama up to the day of her final illness.

After the First World War Henry and Annette came to share their son's home in Kensington. The Introduction to Henry's

### *Full Circle*

final section of the Akbar-Nama is dated from there.<sup>1</sup> But they did not give up Pitfold completely. It was the one lasting home that they had made, and after two or three years in Kensington Henry, at 88, returned to it.

Though he had come to London to be with Annette and their son, he did not like the smoke and fogs, and when he had done with the Owl at last, he had no more need of libraries. He discovered a nurse attendant—already of pensionable age though twenty years his junior—whose sufficient great happiness it became to look after him. He persuaded himself that by going to live in Pitfold he could still do something useful; by occupying the house he could keep it fit for occupation.

So Henry went back to independent camping life in the half-empty country house, and there came back a curious echo of past arguments as to how he and Annette could be together. Henry at 88 adjured Annette to resume married life with him in Pitfold. But Annette, six years younger than Henry, was still working at her books and needing libraries. Annette wanted also to be with her son, and his work tied him to London. Annette rightly feared the difficulties of country house-keeping in the post-war years.

The solution found for this problem made for the greatest happiness of both. Henry was in charge of Pitfold; Annette made London her centre but went at week-ends and for holidays to see him. Henry could never give up wanting to look after Annette, if she was with him; wanting, if she entered the room, to rise and greet her and make her comfortable; but after 85 rising is not easy. Henry could not communicate with her save by writing; after 85 writing began to be a burden. After 85 the days from one week-end to another slip by unnoticed. Henry and Annette saw one another enough for happiness. The bond of mutual need and mutual help that had held these two so close together for fifty years began to loosen before it should break in death; this happens probably for most old people. Extreme old age became for both of them a time for retracing their steps in time. It is so for most people.

<sup>1</sup> Though Henry finished his work on the Akbar-Nama at the age of 84 in 1921, the last volume of the work was not published till 1939, ten years after his death. This, as explained in the prefatory note to this publication, was due to a "period of quiescence" in the activities of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

### *India Called Them*

More than one of the notes used here describing events of Henry's childhood or of his youth in India were written down by him in his late eighties. He delighted in these years to discover forgotten kinsfolk. He wished to celebrate his golden wedding with a newspaper announcement of the unromantic ceremony under Act III of 1872 and of how Annette had come to India under inspiration of the Brahmo Samaj; Annette did not want publicly to revive these particular memories; there arose the last of their characteristic discussions, ending in the usual reconciliation, with the final trick taken by Annette. She for her part took up, at 86, as almost the last thing she did, while she could do anything, the care of her father's grave at Stourbridge. She went back in her last year to join Henry at Pitfold. From there she and Henry together returned to their son's care in London in the last months of all.

Annette, living half-way through her 87th year, survived nearly all her kin and her early friends. Only the much younger second family of William Akroyd outlasted her.

Henry survived all his kin: David dying in 1905 at 77, Phemie dying at the same age two years later, Allie reaching all but 81 in 1916, last of all in 1927 that one of the rich fair cousinhood of Dunfermline on whom, so rumour had it, young Henry had once cast his eye. Now old Henry and old Janey set themselves to outlast one another and Henry won.

In the same year at last rest called Henry and Annette both, as India once had called them. Annette, younger of the two by more than five years, was the first to go on March 29, 1929, half-way through her 87th year, after six months of illness and need of professional care. Henry never needed such care; like a coin of pure gold, he wore thinner and thinner with time, till at last he wore out. In his son's house in Kensington during his last months, his memory travelled back to the time before the children, before Annette, before Jeanie; his thoughts dwelt for choice upon his twenties in India and the companionship there of his brother Allie. His son had something of the appearance of Allie; often Henry would address his son as if the son were Allie, recalling youthful adventures and romance. When corrected, he would realize: "Of course, my dear fellow, you're Will, I know." But in a moment he was back again to Allie;

### *Full Circle*

with a mind quite clear but like a child that says "let's pretend," he wanted his son to pretend to be the brother of the unclouded twenties which at the end he remembered best. Henry, with all his force of mind, was never anything but a child at heart.

In the diary which for that year 1929 his son, then busy in the University of London, kept, in the book which Annette had bought for that year but could not use herself, the last record of Henry stands:

Friday, 8 November: Just before Finance Committee heard that H.B. was very ill—thought pneumonia—doctor not to be reached. Got back about 6 and found Tutu. Doctor came about 9—said he would not recover consciousness but might last the night or 48 hours. At 9.55 a sudden change—a little cry—and he went quietly—with an instant change from struggle to peace.



*Considering what the lives and actions of most of our so-called Indian heroes really were and the circumstances in which our Indian empire was formed, it is no doubt better for individual reputations and even for the fame of our country that the waves of obscurity and forgetfulness should continue to engulf much of our Eastern annals. . . . The history of our Indian empire is pre-eminently that of the actions of ordinary men in extraordinary circumstances.*

Henry Beveridge in article on "Warren Hastings in Lower Bengal" (*Calcutta Review*, October 1877).

*It is a common remark that authors feel towards their books like parents to their children, but there is this difference that authors generally do not have a superior affection for their first-born.*

Article on "Jean Jacques Rousseau" (*Calcutta Review*, October 1878).

*The tendency to magnify the past at the expense of the present is hardly more respectable than the meanness of which we are all occasionally guilty, of praising dead men at the expense of those whom we have with us.*

Article on "The City of Patna" (*Calcutta Review*, April 1883)

*When we go to one of our old cemeteries and find how nearly every Englishman or Englishwoman died in the morning of their lives, we see what a price we have paid for our Indian empire. It is easy for us now with sufficient salaries and a settled Government to marvel at the deeds of our Anglo-Indian Nawabs, but we cannot forget that we have taken up their inheritance. Caesar's unprovoked aggression upon Britain led to the civilisation of the country, and Clive and Hastings' spoliations have resulted in British India.*

Article on "The Patna Massacre" (*Calcutta Review*, October 1884).

## EPILOGUE

**A**T the end of his first book—on the *History and Statistics of the District of Bakarganj*—Henry Beveridge, my father, added a chapter of General Remarks and a Note to General Remarks. These additions drew the fire of critics as irrelevant and out of place and out of harmony with prevailing views. It will, I hope, be regarded as natural and not out of place that, in concluding this study of my parents, I should follow my father's example, and add an Epilogue of General Remarks and a Note to the Epilogue, referring to some of my father's contemporaries in India.

When I began my study of my father's and mother's letters I knew very little about these two people in the most important and interesting period of their lives. This was not because I had no chance of knowing. I was never far from my parents during all their later time in Britain; even when I was in London working while they were in Surrey, I saw them and talked to them nearly every week-end; towards the end of their time they lived in my house, as I in the beginning of my time had lived in theirs. I could have learned from them by word of mouth all that is in this volume and much that is now lost and that I should like to know. I failed to learn simply because I was absorbed in my own life and activities. I took my parents for granted, as we all do. But happily they were both letter-keepers as well as admirable letter-writers. I have been able, after their death, to know my parents far better than I knew them in their lives.

This book is first and foremost a study of their characters. It is second a study of family life in an unusual setting—the British adventure in India. It deals with that adventure, not as an affair of pomp and power, but in its influence on the lives of those who undertook it, not as leaders or for a season, but as their journeyman vocation. It shows as warp and woof of this life separation and sickness; the difficult choices that had to be made; how difficulties of all kinds were lightened by mutual help of kinsmen, friends and strangers. It is an illustration from real life of what Thackeray wrote in a romance. It is a contribution to what one of Thackeray's kinsmen, a younger contemporary of

### *India Called Them*

my father in India, described as the necessary basis for understanding of the British adventure: "British-Indian history must be written again on the basis of private memoirs."<sup>1</sup>

What a strange pathos seems to me to accompany all our Indian story! Besides that official history which fills Gazettes, and embroiders banners with names of victory; which gives moralists and enemies cause to cry out at English rapine; and enables patriots to boast of invincible British valour—besides the splendour and conquests, the wealth and glory, the crowned ambition, the conquered danger, the vast prize, and the blood freely shed in winning it—should not one remember the tears, too? Besides the lives of myriads of British men, conquering on a hundred fields, from Plassey to Meanee, and bathing them *cruore nostro*: think of the women, and the tribute which they perforce must pay to those victorious achievements. Scarce a soldier goes to yonder shores but leaves a home and grief in it behind him. The lords of the subject province find wives there: but their children cannot live on the soil. The parents bring their children to the shore, and part from them. The family must be broken up. Keep the flowers of your home beyond a certain time, and the sickening buds wither and die. In America it is from the breast of a poor slave that a child is taken: in India it is from the wife, and from under the palace, of a splendid proconsul.<sup>2</sup>

If I have done my task of selection and arrangement even tolerably, my father stands out, through his own unstudied words, as a fine spirit and lovable character in relation to another fine spirit in many ways different from him but complementary. Each of them, moreover, in words which my father used of my mother but which apply equally to him, was a high and vehement nature. In deciding to marry after having met only five times before, they took a gallant risk.

My mother always used to say that she never really loved my father till after she had married him and as she got gradually to know him. What she wrote to him shows that this was true. Her letters to him in the three weeks of their engagement are hardly love letters at all; most of them are slightly fractious arguments about arrangements by a person with many affairs on her hands. Even eighteen months after marriage, while declaring

<sup>1</sup> Preface to *The Ritchies in India*, by Gerald Ritchie (John Murray, 1920, p. ix).

<sup>2</sup> *The Newcomes*, Chap. V.

## *Epilogue*

her love, my mother could write with a curious detachment: "I have a double sentiment as of a happiness attained and a danger escaped in our marriage, because it would have been so easy to have differed much or to have been indifferent." Her real love letters come later—in full and overflowing measure. After four years she wrote: "I do not want anything except to be with you." After seven years: "Every year binds me closer and more inextricably to you," and "there are great unexplored regions in your thoughts that I want to traverse." After fifteen years: "I do not know when you will come but I look for you as those who look for the morning." After forty years, in the close war-time companionship of life in their gardener's cottage, her diary records: "Read Marcus Aurelius together with great content."

On my father's side too, at the beginning, there were sentiments of pity and of knight-errantry that are not love; his first letter offered her an imperfect gift. Later he confessed that when he married her he had believed that the flame of passion in him was dead. But he tried to cancel his letter about the imperfect gift at once; "every day I love you more and more." From that day onwards the love letters came repeatedly. After four years: "You took the confusion out of my life and kaleidoscoped the jarring fragments of thought and action." After nine years, in their first long separation: "Now that you are really coming and that an outburst of feeling won't make you unhappy and think that you should come at once, I feel inclined to tell you how my heart cries out for you at times." Two years after, looking back on this first separation, in a second separation, he asked: "Why do I miss you so much more this time than in 1884?" And so on and so on. After eighteen years: "I love you in every way." After twenty-four years he was conspiring with his son to give pleasure to Annette by copying out for her a poem which had pleased him, and was proposing to Annette collaboration in a book where he would work in the mine below and she with her lighter pen would give the artistic touch.

In an equal marriage, with little previous knowledge of one another, my father and my mother took an equal chance. The unity achieved by two strong personalities rested on mutual recognition of functions. Each, of course, recognized the absolute right of the other to expression of opinion on any

### *India Called Them*

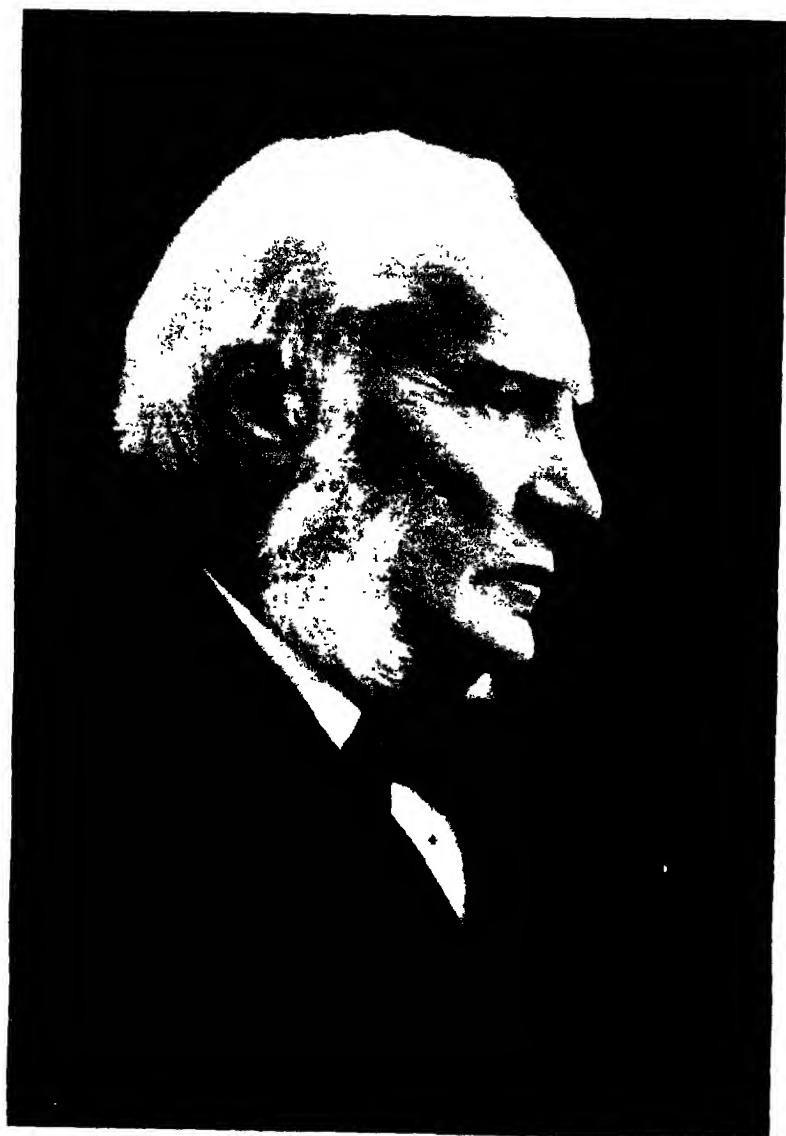
subject; notably my father never made his longer experience of India a reason for suggesting that my mother had not as good a right as he to express her opinion on Indian problems as publicly as she desired, even when she opposed him. On the other hand, though my mother did not in the end see eye to eye with my father on Indian problems, she never reproached him for not making a more prosperous career. She thought it more important that he should be himself than that he should be successful.

Where practical decisions had to be taken one way or another, there came to be an agreed allocation of spheres of influence. My mother accepted absolutely without repining my father's decisions as to retiring or not retiring, or as to choice of station, in so far as he had a choice; she learned, though not without repining, to accept his refusals to leave work for holiday in the hills. On the other hand the children were her sphere; even on the difficult problem of their religious education and observance—a matter on which my father felt strongly—she got her way. And when my father's service in India was over, the choice of where to live was my mother's rather than his. He threw out suggestions about going to Scotland and to the end of his days maintained that he had not lost his Scottish domicile because he intended to return to Scotland some time. But he threw out from time to time other happy thoughts, such as settling in Oxford or Geneva or Dresden or elsewhere in Europe, with equal seriousness or want of seriousness. He was content to leave this matter to my mother because he would be happy anywhere with her and the children and books.

My mother in her later years appeared to the unobservant an imperious lady. To those who knew her only in England, it may be surprising to learn from her letters how submissive she was to my father in India, how she trembled at his frown, and sat up all night to answer his reproof. The explanation is simple. The things that were in my father's sphere of decision—his work and where it should be done—were by this time in the past in India. The practical matters to be decided in England were in my mother's sphere.

My mother, being a woman, was, of course, a practical creature. But she spent relatively little of her time and energy in the practices in which so many women, of choice or of necessity,





*Henry at 76*

*Photo Bessford*



I h. w. B resj rd

*Annette at 70*





## *Epilogue*

spent them in her day and spend them now—in shopping or in material domestic tasks. Shopping, in the days of her courtship, she named to my father as one of her pet aversions; it became a delight only when it came to mean expeditions with the children. Buttons and darning, in the first months of marriage, she named to my father as part of her new profession and she took that as she took all tasks seriously. But it did not remain one of her normal tasks; European life in India was life with an overflowing abundance of service and could hardly have been carried on without it. Transporting the children to and fro from India and securing lodging, care and teaching for them in England required immense energy and organizing power, but did not require that my mother should become a seamstress or a cook. When she found that she could actually teach crochet to the Countess of Noer she marked the event by an exclamation mark, in reporting it to my father. I have no recollection of her ever cooking a meal, though of course she would have taught herself to do so had it been needful. My mother was a woman but not first and foremost a housewife. She had a pen in her hands far more often than a frying-pan or a needle.

For both my parents books were the background of their life. In their later days each of them was absorbed intellectually on a specialized writing task—my father on Abul-Fazl "The Owl," and my mother on Gul-Badan and the Babur-Nama. To those who knew them only in these days, as in the main I did till after their deaths I saw their letters, it may be surprising to find how various as well as perpetual was their reading.

The letters of their earlier years show them both reading incessantly—histories, travels, biographies, novels, philosophy, poetry, sermons—sharing their readings and relating their experiences to what they read; they compared or contrasted themselves or the people they met in the flesh with the people they met in books, whether of fancy or of fact. The Britain covered by this record of my parents with their parents has been illumined by a succession of great novelists—Jane Austen, Thackeray, Dickens, the Brontës, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope, George Meredith—holding the mirror of fiction up to nature. This record sometimes seems to me like holding the mirror of nature up to fiction.

## *India Called Them*

My mother once likened the youthful aspirations with which she went to India to those of Dorothea Brooke in devoting herself to Dr. Casaubon; my father was fond of comparing her to Romola, with myself as the child Lillo. For my father, there is a parallel to another famous character of fiction—Colonel Newcome; many of those who knew and liked my father have said this of him.

"He had a natural simplicity, an habitual practice of kind and generous thoughts." These words of Thackeray fit my father to a hair. He was as transparently honest as the day and he could afford to be. Which of us could bear to have every act, almost every thought, laid bare as I have done for him in this volume, with the certainty that every fresh revelation would only make us seem dearer and better, with nothing for which we need blush?

My father, like Colonel Newcome, was the soul of honour, self-judging and self-reliant. Commenting to my mother on a famous case in English political life, he wrote to her: "I begin to think better of Dilke, but no man should leave questions involving his honour to the judgment of friends. He should decide them himself."

My father, like Colonel Newcome, never forgot a poor relation. He was a helper of lame dogs and strays; as some houses are said to be marked in chalk by the confraternity of tramps as places where a kindly reception can be expected, so there was something in my father's face which made him the resort of strangers in a difficulty. He delighted, as he once said, to exercise compassion. There was in his first approach to my mother, in the defeat of her Indian mission, at least a touch of the same motive of rescue which led Colonel Newcome to give shelter to Mrs. Casey. Compassion is a dangerous guide in choosing a mate; providentially, since Annette was to live, not die conveniently like Mrs. Casey, she was a creature of very different metal from the foolish mother of Clive.

In smaller matters, such as clothing, Henry's attitude was exactly that of Colonel Newcome:

"I say, Kean, is that blue coat of mine very old?"

"Uncommon white about the seams, Colonel," says the man.

## *Epilogue*

"Is it older than other people's coats?"—Kean is obliged gravely to confess that the Colonel's coat is very queer.

"Get me another coat then—see that I don't do anything or wear anything unusual. I have been so long out of Europe, that I don't know the customs here, and am not above learning."

This conversation between the Colonel and his valet must have had many parallels between Henry and his bearer Ramyad. Henry's attitude to women was also that of Colonel Newcome: "the dear old boy fancies every woman is a beauty." So was his lack of pomposity. Colonel Newcome, at the theatre with the children, ate an orange with perfect satisfaction; Henry once shocked his schoolboy son horribly by munching an apple in a London omnibus, as he shocked the head waiter at a smart London restaurant by asking for jam and tea in the middle of a six-course dinner.

With these similarities there were differences. Whereas Colonel Newcome was entirely ignorant of books except those few which formed his travelling library, my father read everything and remembered what he read. Colonel Newcome dreamed vainly of reading the classics with his son; my father taught Greek to his son and remained always the better scholar of the two. And though it is probably true of my father as of Colonel Newcome that in practical matters "if he had lived to be as old as Jahaleel a boy could still have cheated him," in matters of the mind he had a ruthless critical judgment; in his letters to Annette he spared neither foolish books nor foolish persons. And, as he said himself, he was wholly unsentimental about criminals.

My father, again, was utterly without any conventional snobbery; he would never have said as Colonel Newcome did that "a young man whose father may have to wait behind me at dinner, should not be brought into my company." My father would have thought that such a possibility added to the prospective friendliness of any party. He took a wicked pleasure sometimes in reminding Annette that her father had been a tanner, and in parading his grandfather the baker. But then, my father was a Scot.

As I have mentioned the delicate subject of social class, I may add a few comments on it. Both my father and my mother came of stock which may rightly be described as middle class; meaning

## *India Called Them*

by that, people who have to work for their livings but work as a rule under their own direction, not under orders of another, and not to trade union hours. There is not a trace of aristocracy in any of their forbears; armorial bearings were far from them. So also was the horny hand of toil. My four great-grandfathers were respectively a master-baker in the ancient Scottish city of Dunfermline; a supervisor of excise in the smaller Scottish town of Linlithgow; a livery-stable keeper in the small Midland town of Stourbridge; and, I think but am not sure, a stone-mason in Birmingham. But each of the four had something special about him.

The master-baker—David Beveridge—was elected Deacon of Baxters, that is to say, leader of his trade association, at the age of 24, and Convener of all the Dunfermline trades two years later; he was clearly a remarkable young man.

The supervisor of excise—Alexander Watt—having been trained for the Ministry, showed that he had a mind of his own, by insisting on conscientious scruples and by giving up his calling.

The livery-stable keeper of Stourbridge—Joseph Walford—was the first to introduce his townfolk to the new-fangled device of a funeral hearse in place of a bier.

Of my fourth great-grandfather, James Bates or Akroyd of Birmingham, though I am not quite sure how he earned his living, I know many things more important. I know that he lived and worked in very humble circumstances brought on by his own independence. He was a family rebel and a political rebel, ran away from home and rejected his father's name, called himself a Jacobin and impressed on his own son two things above all, that every individual should be independent himself and that every individual owed a duty to the state. Having come, through his mother, from a family long established in the West Riding—generation after generation of farmers, clothiers, merchants, always in the will-making class—James Akroyd himself dropped out of this class to become a wage-earner. To this class his son William Akroyd, having begun work as a journeyman currier for wages, very soon, by his native energy, restored himself and his successors.

This middle class of independent workers—farmers, merchants,

## *Epilogue*

shopkeepers, sea-captains, doctors, lawyers and other professions as they arose—was a natural, though not, of course, an exclusive breeding-ground of individualism, in affairs and in religion. That is its outstanding merit. That is why it is important in one form or another to keep a place for this way of life and work in future.

With its merits this class is apt in individual cases to show certain weaknesses. One is that it has not as a rule a high resistance to demoralization by the wealth that every now and again falls to the lot of some of its members. My mother's elder sister, having married a barrister rich enough to be contentedly briefless and to stand unsuccessfully for Parliament, once sneered at her step-mother as a tailor's daughter with education; she herself was a tanner's daughter who had been to college, though my father always declared that she had failed of education. My father's only wealthy uncle—Erskine I of the family table, founder of the rich branch of the house of B—objected to his daughter's marrying a curate, on the two grounds that the curate was poor and was the son of an Irish gaoler; yet he himself was the son of a baker and had begun work as apprentice to a draper.

It is an illustration of the weakness of the middle-class when first it attains wealth, that this most successful son of David Beveridge the baker apparently did little to help his two elder brothers when they were both low together, as Jemima would have put it. At the time of Henry the elder's greatest extremity in 1850, a letter of his rich brother Erskine to their sister Elizabeth in Australia giving family news, merely tells her that of Henry and Henry's family he has seen and heard nothing for a long time, but understands that Henry has now some employment with a Glasgow publisher. Of Robert, who also had been in financial trouble, Erskine reports, with equal detachment, that he has now found employment in a bank near London. The first Erskine was a dynamic creature, of great public spirit and an acknowledged benefactor of his native town. When as a boy he offered to sign a petition against slavery and was told that he was too young, he asked if there were no boy slaves on whose behalf he might sign. When he died, every shop in Dunfermline was closed on the day of his funeral. Yet it is clear that he did not

### *India Called Them*

find it easy to part with his new wealth. It was left to his second wife after his death to splash his money in building the large house in which his son was so hospitable later. In the first generation from David of Dunfermline it was left to the poor branches of the House of B. to help themselves and one another.

To my father, helping poor relations was the one luxury from which he could not be parted, and my mother was both too wise and too generous to discourage him. She liked contriving pleasures for others as much as he did. When she quarrelled with my father about spending, as every now and again she did quarrel, it was for spending on something she thought unnecessary for themselves—a carriage or a doctor. In the end, in spite of all adjurations by my mother, my father never saved any money. By the time he ended he had parted even from most of his books, except those with a family association. His will was sworn at £82. He went out of the world with almost as few possessions as those with which he entered it. That is because in his youth, when he earned more than enough for his own needs, he maintained his mother and sister at home; because later he spent without reserve upon his children.

Consideration of the stock from which my parents came and of what has happened to it suggests another general observation. When the generation to which I belong is finished there will, in the next generation, be few descendants in Britain of David and Margaret Beveridge of Dunfermline, less than twenty altogether in the fourth generation after these two. But there will be many such descendants, more than a hundred in that generation and many more to follow them, in Canada, New Zealand and, above all, Australia; of the few in Britain, most will come from a granddaughter of David and Margaret who, marrying in Canada, brought six children back with her to Scotland after their father's death. So on my mother's side the stock of William Akroyd of Stourbridge seems doomed to extinction in Britain, but there will be large families of his descendants in New Zealand and in the far west of Canada. The stocks from which my parents came have dwindled woefully in their home country. But like the British race as a whole they have spread and multiplied and renewed their vigour in the new homes overseas.

Consideration of my parents themselves suggests two con-

## *Epilogue*

clusions: first, how little worldly success has to do with ability; second, how little happiness depends on worldly success.

My father entered the service of India by open competition at the head of his year. He had a fine intelligence, an artistic sensitiveness to beauty in words and nature, untiring industry, good health, and devotion to his adopted country. Yet he never rose to the head of his profession. His forecast to my mother just before he married her, that he would never be higher in the service than he stood then was all but literally fulfilled. At the end of seventeen years in India he was a District and Sessions Judge; after thirty-five years he retired with that rank. He was never in or near the inner chambers of the Government of India or in a position of influence beyond a narrow district. In one of the outspoken articles by which from time to time my father impeded his professional career, he spoke of men who "bestride the poor land of India like Colossi in touch with it only at the two points of Simla and Calcutta, and sublimely regardless of all that lies between."<sup>1</sup> My father himself was never at Simla, the summer seat of the Indian Government. He was in Calcutta only for four years in his thirty-five, and then not concerned with central affairs but with a district between the capital and the sea. His life was spent in the lands between, in the plains dominated and turned into swamps each year by the great rivers. He began in Mymensing on the Brahmaputra and he ended in Murshidabad on the Ganges. No central influence and no honours came his way.

He got his name into the English papers by having to send a telegram about the Bhutan expedition in 1865. He received a degree of honour for eminent proficiency in Bengali in 1868. He was made President of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1890. He was mentioned by the Indian papers whenever he was passed over for promotion. But otherwise his career in India was wholly undistinguished. I have not found his name in any history of India or in any of the biographies or personal memoirs of his more successful colleagues. Of two of these colleagues it has

<sup>1</sup> This article on "The Administration of Justice in Bengal," published in the *Calcutta Review* of October 1888, received an enthusiastic column and a half notice in the *Englishman*. "Mr. Beveridge goes into the subject with unsparing keenness and if logic and sarcasm were capable of moving the powers that be, his paper might lead to some substantial reform." The article was certainly the stuff to give to the troops, but was not calculated to please the generals.



seemed worth while to say something more in a Note to this Epilogue, in illustration of the conditions of worldly success.

It may be that my father was in some ways too fine an instrument for the work he had to do, that a less delicate, more cautious, mind would have made fewer mistakes. A man who could write the letters that he wrote could perhaps have done better some other work than settling the fates of murderers and thieves or deciding which of several witnesses with equal readiness to lie for a friend or against an enemy was, for the moment, finding it convenient to speak the truth. There were in my father a capacity for sweet unreasonableness, a contempt for expediency, and an impulsiveness which may from time to time have led him astray. But the main explanation for his lack of professional advancement was simply that he was too much before his time.

His early years in India had ranked him firmly on the side of Indian aspirations for self-government. He felt himself as an alien ruler to be out of place. In season and out of season he gave utterance to his views; he wished to bring about the self-government of India as rapidly as possible, not as slowly as possible. This did not mean that he thought a change to self-government could be made at once.

He was anything but blind either to the achievements of British rule or to the weaknesses of Indian character, bred under centuries of tyrannical or alien domination. At the beginning of his General Remarks he maintained that the undoubted improvements in Bengal in the past eighty years were due mainly to British rule, and he punctured the glories claimed for Hindu rulers past and present. "Pratapaditya, the King of Chandecan or Jessors and the most famous and powerful of the so-called 'twelve suns of Bengal' seems from his biography to have been a brutal tyrant who fell into his proper place when his conquerors shut him up in an iron cage." "It was my fortune some years ago to be stationed at Kuch Behar for many months, so that I had an opportunity of studying its history in the old records, etc., and I can confidently state that the condition of the worst-administered district in Bengal is better than that of Kuch Behar under its native Rajahs." "Hindus, and Orientals in general,"

## Epilogue

he said in one of his articles,<sup>1</sup> "are more than *laudatores temporis acti*. They are *laudatores temporis ficti*. . . ." "The besetting sin of the Bengalees," as he wrote to my mother in one of his first letters to her, "is that they will think and talk and talk and think for ever but they will not act. But then that is the very reason we are here for if Bengalees could only act half as well as they talk there would be no need for us westerns to rule over them. We must therefore take them as we find them and do our best for them."

My father was anything but blind, on the other side, to the disadvantages of British rule. Referring to the destruction of native weaving by importation of Manchester goods he wrote that "English power was not always so beneficent as it now is, and there was a time when our English laws, and still more our English desire to make rapid fortunes wrought sad havoc in Eastern Bengal." This was then already in the past, but there was a continuing weakness which my father emphasized. "Considerable as has been the progress of the Bengal districts under English rule, it would doubtless have been much greater under more favourable circumstances. Probably the frequent changes of officers have been the greatest obstacle to improvement." My father supported this by a quotation from the Lieutenant-Governor's Administration Report for 1872-73, mentioning the difficulties of the Government in resisting pressure for continual change of station and describing the constant flight from less healthy or less pleasant stations. From this my father drew the moral "that we should endeavour to place the internal administration of the country as much as possible in the hands of natives. And in doing so, we should, I think, not only appoint Bengalis to appointments in Bengal, but should, other things being equal, give the preference to the inhabitants of the district. . . . Bengal cannot afford to be administered by foreigners, and the inhabitants of one part of India are often almost as much foreigners in another part of it as Europeans are."

Finally, reflecting on this, he added a Note to the General Remarks: "As I have said that Bengal cannot afford to be administered by foreigners, it may perhaps be supposed that I

<sup>1</sup> "The City of Patna" (*Calcutta Review*, April 1883.)

### *India Called Them*

am one of those who advocate the immediate abandonment of India by Great Britain. Such, however, is not the case. . . . Granted that we wrongfully got possession of India, still to abandon her now would be to act like a man-stealer who should kidnap a child, and then in a fit of repentance abandon him in a tiger-jungle." But my father always meant in practice what for so many others was an empty phrase, that the administration of India should become Indian as soon as possible. He suggested as one immediate step that nearly all judicial offices in Bengal might be held by natives; as another "that no more appointments should be made to the Indian Civil Service as at present constituted or at least that the number should be greatly restricted."

This is the way that my father was writing more than seventy years ago. This is the kind of evidence which, sixty years ago, he gave to the Public Services Commission in India; he thought no arrangement for recruiting the Service in future would be satisfactory which did not include abolition of the examinations in England. With that attitude he would certainly not appear a safe man to those in authority, at a time when authority was being challenged. And it so happened that his personal fate came for decision at a time of growing strain, when racial feelings had been embittered by the controversy over the Ilbert Bill of 1883. Just before that controversy he had held in Patna one of the most coveted positions open to his rank. Annette had thrown all her energy into making a social as well as a professional success of this position. He went on furlough in 1883 with the hope of returning to promotion. He returned in 1884 to find racial feeling going from bad to worse and to feel himself solitary between contending parties. The prophecy which he had made to Annette in the days of his courtship, that "some day we shall be found out as neither philo-English nor philo-Bengalees and we shall fall to the ground," was duly fulfilled. In place of promotion or the chance of staying in the capital, he found himself relegated to Faridpur in the Ganges marshes, next door to Bakarganj. The curve of his professional career turned downwards.

The curve of his happiness did not. I have used the words "Faridpur Victory" to describe his and Annette's time in

## *Epilogue*

Faridpur, because it illustrates completely the second moral, of how little worldly success has to do with happiness. It was a disappointment, of course, to my father not to be promoted. It was a blow to my mother, bringing out her sister for Calcutta gaieties, planning to conquer Calcutta as she had conquered Patna, to find herself proceeding to a swamp. Yet both my father and my mother came to look on their year at Faridpur as one of the happiest in their lives. It was so because they made it so. With the children in England and reduced from an absorbing daily occupation to be the subjects of a monthly cheque and a fortnightly letter, in a station with hardly any society, my father and mother enjoyed a second honeymoon. In the present they needed nothing but one another and their books. For the future, as the prospects of more important work in India faded, their minds turned to England.

The very dullness of Faridpur gave them a golden opportunity for saving. The roads were so bad that they had no need or use for carriages. The establishment was cut down from the thirty-nine of Bankipur to eighteen, less than the original twenty-one of Rangpur. They set themselves to save for the children. There is an unmistakable note of triumph in the balance sheet which my mother entered in her account book for the first half of 1885. This showed total receipts by Henry, Rs. 14,230; total expenditure, Rs. 9,261; "saved," Rs. 4,969; that is to say, a third of the whole.

My mother used to speak of her acceptance of Faridpur as a victory.<sup>9</sup> It was a victory because she and my father made it so. They had so many resources in themselves that they could draw happiness even from dullness and relegation. As Fortune closed one door she opened another. She commonly does so for those with eyes to see.

The happiness of my father and mother was never seriously affected by anything that happened outside their home. It was affected continually by the separations and the sickness which are the warp and woof of European life in India. Since the days to which this book relates, there have been great improvements both in transport, shortening journeys, and in the understanding of ill-health, and particularly of the epidemic diseases of India. As two recent historians of this country observe, "Until near the

### *India Called Them*

end of the nineteenth century sanitarians in India, as elsewhere, were fighting these diseases in the dark."

The cholera microbe was first recognized in 1883; my mother was all but killed by it at Shillong, four years before. The plague bacillus was identified in 1894 and the part played by fleas in disseminating it was established in the course of the next twelve years; fleas form a common theme of my mother's letters from Mussoorie in 1882. The anopheles mosquito was discovered as the carrier of malaria in 1897; that was years after my parents had struggled with recurrent attacks of fever in themselves and their children.

In these matters there is knowledge where before there was ignorance. But effective application of knowledge lingers.

India has a problem of ill-health on which nothing but a revolution in housing and in sanitary practice, combined with abandonment of many old customs, will make an impression. The diseases which destroyed my brother's mind and nearly destroyed me, which weakened recurrently others of my family, are not peculiar to Europeans. They waste Indian childhood and Indian life at all ages. The care which my mother took about the milk supply for her children she took because she was European and my mother. Even as I began writing this Epilogue the appalling nature of the milk supply to the Indian people generally was made plain by an official impartial Report.

India has a problem of poverty which she cannot hope to solve finally without solving also her problem of population. That she can do only by radical changes of marriage customs and behaviour in marriage and, underlying this, a revolution in the position of women. It will perhaps be found that this most difficult revolution is the most necessary of all, for the sake both of the Indian people themselves and of their friendly understanding by other peoples.

In *A Passage to India*, one of Mr. E. M. Forster's Indian characters remarks that he gives any Englishman two years to learn that he cannot treat Indians on terms of equal friendship: "They come out intending to be gentlemen, and are told it will not do. . . . And I give any Englishwoman six months." There is a reason for this difference, which does not lie in the greater racial arrogance of women. It lies in the different position

## *Epilogue*

of women, East and West. My mother went to India at the invitation of Indian men to serve Indian women. Her first hosts and friends in India were Indians, not English. She began by disliking thoroughly the common attitude of superiority and aloofness assumed by many Englishwomen of her time. She gave much energy to breaking down racial barriers. She kept many Indian friends all her life.

But there is no doubt that her feelings to the Indian people changed, and that she lost her sense of brotherhood and sisterhood with them. "There are things and classes in India," she wrote to Henry after fifteen years there, "which have brushed out all my poetry about her people. If the sentiment still glows in you, dear, I am glad."

The light in Annette began to wane early, as soon as in her first year she came to see where Indian men in the mass placed Indian women in the mass. In the democracies of Western Europe and of America women are now the equal partners of men in political power and in nearly all that makes human life. Till they are that in Eastern lands as well, West and East will not understand one another.

Since I began this study of bygone India, writing in Britain, events have moved fast in both countries. I began nearly two years ago, when the ending of British rule in India, though in prospect, was not certain, with no date fixed. I correct the last proofs and date this Epilogue after watching the Indian Independence Bill in one day pass through all its stages in the House of Lords. The great British adventure of rule in India has reached its term.

The British rule that is ending has conferred great benefits upon India. That does not mean that the British have done or have attempted all that they should. Even when the selfish exploitation of earlier days was over and the interests of the Indian people became the dominant consideration in framing policy under British rule, that rule itself was in many ways too negative. It did not, to take one example, in allowing India to start on the path of industrialization, make any attempt to prevent industrialization from producing squalor and other social evils for the many as well as wealth for some. It did not and, without

### *India Called Them*

more interference with social customs than is possible for an alien government, it probably could not solve the problem of population in India or raise the Indian people above want.

But it is at this moment of historical interest only either to praise or to criticize the British rule of the past. India could not become a healthy, happy country under British rule. With that accepted, another negative of at least equal importance follows. India cannot become healthy and happy simply by getting rid of British rule. That by itself leads nowhere. Autocracy does not become freedom by changing the colour of the autocrat.

My father, following his father, held that the prime object of British rule in India should be to prepare the way for its own extinction by bringing about an India that could combine independence with internal order and material and spiritual progress. The unsettled question to-day is whether or not such an India has yet been brought into being. For lasting good government we need not democracy simply but an educated democracy.

The need and urgency of that are greater to-day than ever because of the technical increase in the arts of administration. The nations of Western Europe were self-governing, in the sense of being independent of other nations, long before they became democratic. They had substantially irremovable rulers. But the rule of a despot in the past did not affect the daily lives of his people or threaten the safety of other peoples, as it may do to-day. There has been a technical progress in the arts of government—a development of the means of exercising power over others—comparable to the technical progress in the arts of destruction by war, and equally fraught with danger to mankind.

The free nations of Western Europe and North America had the good fortune to pass out of autocracy into democracy before this development took place, that is to say, before the arts of totalitarian self-perpetuating rule had been perfected. These nations also have made some if insufficient and unequal progress towards being educated to their responsibilities. India is in process of passing from alien rule to rule from within at a time when totalitarian technique has been developed and is practised widely; at a time when many of her people are still barely literate. Her future depends entirely on the spirit of those who,

## *Epilogue*

in these circumstances, are called by accident or by their own design to rule her teeming millions. Their opportunity is immense and so is their responsibility. Upon them it rests to make the act of the British in leaving India to-day something different from what, in my father's words, it would have been seventy years ago: the act of a kidnapper who, in a fit of remorse, abandons the child he has stolen to die in a tiger-jungle.

I saw the letters which are the material of this book for the first time fifteen years ago, after the deaths of my mother and my father. I realized that from the letters it would be possible to present a picture from life of an age that has vanished and has left no parallel. I said to myself that some time I would try to draw that picture. But I had no great hope then that the time would ever come, absorbed as I was in my own work and personal interests. Three years ago I gave up both an academic post and a public office for a political career. Two years ago I lost my political career without hope of recovery. At one moment thereafter it seemed likely that I should visit India in person for an absorbing urgent task, but that plan also failed. So I found leisure to return to my father's and mother's letters, to go back through their eyes and minds and hearts, through their aspirations and loves and sorrows, to bygone Bengal. When fortune closes one door, she generally opens another.

July 1947



## NOTE ON SOME CONTEMPORARIES OF HENRY BEVERIDGE IN INDIA

A number of my father's contemporaries in India whose successful careers there have given rise to biographies or memoirs appear in his letters. Of two in particular—Sir William Wilson Hunter, K.C.S.I., and Sir Henry Cotton, K.C.S.I.—something more may be said here, by way of tracing the conditions of success in the India of the past. Each of these two had some things in common with my father, though different things in the two cases. There was a third, an exact, contemporary of my father—James Monro—of whom a few words may fitly be said. In spirit as in age he was nearest of the three to my father.

### *William Hunter*

William Hunter, born in July 1840 more than three years after my father, came of similar parentage—Scottish middle class with little or no Indian background; he was a clever boy attracted like my father by the open door of competitive examination; he came out fifth in 1861, as my father had come out first in 1857; he reached India in November 1862 and left it as a K.C.S.I. with twenty-five years of service in March 1887.

The origins of William Hunter and Henry Beveridge were so similar that there was actually a contact between them. William Hunter on his first leave in 1867 went to stay at Eyemouth with my father's sister Maggie and her husband Stephen Bell; the Bells were friends of the family of Mrs. Hunter. But William Hunter's family background was more prosperous than Henry Beveridge's; his mother's people—woollen manufacturers at Hawick—were definitely rich; instead of having to support his parents, he was able to look to continuing support from them, in making the kind of career he wanted. This in his early days was writing rather than administering India. He had, for everything but private letters, a readier and lighter pen than my father or indeed than most of his colleagues, and turned this to admirable account; his work in describing the conditions of Indian life, in organizing the *Gazetteer of India*, and generally in bringing about understanding of Indian problems was of the first quality.

But the real difference between these two young Scots—the one who succeeded and the one who did not—was in aim and temperament. My father was shy, critical of himself and of others, incautious, ambitious only to serve. William Hunter at 22, in his early letters to his betrothed, presents almost a caricature of the young Scot on the

### *Some Contemporaries of Henry Beveridge in India*

make, with achieving greatness as his avowed aim and with complete confidence that he would succeed in this.

I aspire to a circle far above the circle of fashion—the circle of power. . . .

I have not a moment's doubt but that, if health be granted, I shall make a great figure in India. . . .

It is a dreadful fate—that of a woman who takes away her husband's chance of greatness. . . .

Oh why were we both born ambitious! . . .

This was William Hunter in youth. In his middle years, as is well explained by his biographer, when attacked by enemies, William Hunter foiled them by not at once rushing into the fray with them on their chosen ground but biding his time. He had the courage needed for taking the unpopular side, as he, like my father, did on the Ilbert Bill. But when he found himself under attack, he was as canny as my father was impulsive.

In his later years, William Hunter became naturally complacent about the British achievement of his time. "Can we ever conciliate India? This was the vital question to which the ablest administrators deliberately answered No, in the India of the Company. It remains the vital question to which we deliberately answer Yes, in the India of the Queen. As a matter of fact the task of conciliation has been accomplished." So William Hunter wrote in 1891. Both Henry Beveridge and Henry Cotton would have answered differently and would have been nearer the truth. But knowing this truth did not in those days make for success.

#### *Henry Cotton*

Henry Cotton, born at Madras in September 1845, came out 26th in the examination of June 1865,<sup>1</sup> reached India more than two years later, in October 1867, and left it on retirement in April 1902 with thirty-five years of service. Before he left he was in the same camp as my father on the racial issue. He came to be described by his opponents in the Ilbert Bill controversy as a "white babu," and a slightly junior contemporary of him and of my father said of him: "I never met a man more enthusiastic for Indians and their cause. . . . He loved them 'not wisely but too well.'"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The competition of 1865 had developed greatly since the time eight years before when my father entered. There were in 1865 nearly 300 competitors for the Indian Civil Service and of these 52 were successful; the top man of that year was Charles James Lyall. In 1857 when my father headed the list there were 60 competitors and only 12 were successful.

<sup>2</sup> Gerald Ritchie in *The Ritchies in India* (p. 376).

## *India Called Them*

From the point of view of making a successful career in spite of this Henry Cotton had two great advantages over my father. He was the fourth, not the first, of his line in India. He was eight years younger than my father, and came to India ten years later.

The great-grandfather and grandfather of Henry Cotton had both in turn been Directors of the East India Company; his father had been thirty years in the Indian Service. Though he came to India as a competition wallah, he was Haileybury by birth; the old guard in India were ready to welcome him and anxious to give him a chance of doing well. Nor did he, as my father did, from the beginning, feel or show his Indian sympathies; they were a later growth.<sup>1</sup>

Henry Cotton had fine stuff in him and won his spurs. In his first fifteen years his promotion went up by leaps and bounds. But then there came a check. After 1882, as he said, he had no chance in Bengal for many years and he was passed over by more than one of his juniors. The reason was that he had identified himself with Lord Ripon's policy, including the Ilbert Bill. "Sir Rivers Thompson, who was the Lieutenant-Governor for five years from the spring of 1882, was the principal opponent of Lord Ripon's policy. I could not expect promotion in that time."

The five years of Sir Rivers Thompson from 1882 to 1887 were the years which settled finally my father's fate against him; he was one of the very few judges in Bengal who opposed the Lieutenant-Governor. These years came when my father was near the end of his time of service. For Henry Cotton they came and passed when he still had time to recover his place on the ladder of promotion under a new Lieutenant-Governor. He did so and progressed in a climate more sympathetic to his views, which also became steadily more progressive. My father suffered, as my mother in another way had done, for being too much before his times.

Henry Cotton was also before his times but less so. As Commissioner of Assam, he took a line as between the tea-planters and their coolies, which, about 1900, made him highly unpopular not only with the planters but with the Government of India. By this time, however, Indian aspirations—focused in the National Congress which had met for the first time in 1885—had become highly vocal. Henry Beveridge retired in 1893 all but unnoticed. Henry Cotton in 1902 retired amid ovations from Indians wherever he went. On his last official journey he was met by crowded deputations at every railway station; at Bombay, as he wrote, "I was simply swept away by the wave of popular

<sup>1</sup> See p. 40 above.

### *Some Contemporaries of Henry Beveridge in India*

enthusiasm from men with whom I had never had personal relations." Two years later in 1904 he was called back to be President of the Twentieth National Congress. Sir Henry Cotton, K.C.S.I., was honoured both by the Government of India and by the Indian nationalists. Henry Beveridge came and went too soon to be noticed by either.

#### *James Monro*

James Monro was of the same vintage as Henry Beveridge. Entering from the University of Edinburgh for the same examination as my father in August 1857, he came out third. The two young Scots went to India almost together. But James Monro, disagreeing violently with some of the policies of Lord Ripon, retired in 1883 on completing his 25 years of service and thereafter had a somewhat unusual interlude of public office in England, being appointed Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. In that capacity he dealt firmly with disorders during the great strikes of dock-labourers and gas-workers in 1889. But India was burnt into his bones as into my father's. In the 'nineties he returned to India to establish at Ranaghat the Medical Mission where my father visited him in January 1900 and sat down sixteen to dinner with him and his helping family. The Mission was James Monro's way of continuing work for India; study of India's history and culture was my father's way.

The paths of my father, of William Hunter, and of Henry Cotton crossed more than once in India. In the tragic pilgrimage mentioned below, which William Hunter once made with wife and children in search of health for one of them, the whole party stayed with my father at Barisal; when, many years later, my father went to Birbhum he spoke of it as being illuminated by the genius of a Hunter. Henry Cotton was one of the few people who witnessed my parents' marriage before the Registrar in Larkins Lane; he shared with my father an interest in Positivism and once got a subscription from my father for a memorial to Dr. Congreve; the two saw a good deal of one another during the 'eighties in Calcutta when both were under a cloud; they were fellow-travellers to India in 1890 and my father told my mother all about Henry Cotton's walking tour with his three sons in Switzerland and its total cost. Both William Hunter and Henry Cotton are mentioned appreciatively in a number of my father's letters. His own name does not appear either in the full-length biography of William Hunter by a fellow-civilian or in the many letters quoted there, and it does not appear in Henry Cotton's memoirs, in all

## *India Called Them*

the many names of friends and colleagues whom he rejoiced to record.<sup>1</sup>

One more personal difference between my father and these younger contemporaries remains to be noted. My father, in 1857, was shot out to India in the month after he had passed his examination; he went alone and he spent ten lonely years before he saw Scotland again. William Hunter, in 1861-62, had his year of probation and training at home; he went out engaged to be married, was married at the end of his first year of service, and came back for his first leave in five years. Henry Cotton, after the competitive examination, had "two golden years" at home with an assured career ahead of him; at 22, he found and took a wife out with him—a girl of 18.

Yet all three, successful and unsuccessful, had one common experience of broken family life. Though Henry Cotton took his wife with him to India, she did not stay with him long; after six years, with two children, she came home and she stayed at home. Henry Cotton did not lose any children to India, but in the last twenty-eight years of his service there he saw his wife and children only in rare times of furlough; safety for them was bought by separation. William Hunter, in 1870, lost his second son Brian through fever at 2 years of age; the moving account, given in his biography,<sup>2</sup> of how for two months the distracted parents wandered with their three children throughout Bengal in search of healthier surroundings for the sick one, has something in common with the story of my younger brother.

My mother, in the graveyard in Mussoorie, found the tombs of so many children sending terror to her heart. India is full of British children's tombs.

<sup>1</sup> See *Life of Sir William Wilson Hunter*, by F. H. Skrine (Longmans Green & Co., 1901) and *Indian and Home Memories*, by Sir Henry Cotton, K.C.S.I. (T. Fisher Unwin, 1911). Another volume of Indian reminiscences in which I have looked in vain for my father's name is *The Ritchies in India*, by Gerald Ritchie (John Murray, 1920). Yet the author was in Darjeeling at the time when we were living there in 1888, and in Berhampore, just before my father went there in 1891, and mentions in both places many people who appear in my parents' letters.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 189-92.

## POSTSCRIPT ON JEANIE

The day after I had corrected and returned the proofs of this volume, I received from Mrs. Shelley, whose help is acknowledged below, my father's letter to her grandmother, Mrs. Goldie, in December 1869, announcing his engagement. With this letter Mrs. Shelley sent also the one thing that survives from Jeanie's hand—a letter written by her from Barisal in December 1872, the month before she died, to her youngest sister—Ella Lucy—then a child. In this Jeanie signs herself as such; after marriage she was no longer Janie. She talks of Henry as pleased because he had got his steamer from Mr. Campbell; she talks of Mrs. Goldie as about to arrive.

Henry's new letter confirms all that I had surmised in Chapter IV—that this engagement did not come till Henry was on the point of going back to India again and that he regarded Jeanie—he still called her Janie then—as free to change her mind. How Jeanie—then barely turned sixteen—came to visit London is not clear. One can surmise only that this was an expedition arranged by Henry and the two families so that Jeanie might have the chance of making up her mind.

57 Maida Vale  
19 December /69

My dear Mrs. Goldie,

You must excuse my writing to you on a Sunday but I find that Janie told you all on Friday night and so I hasten to confirm her news. I could not write yesterday for we were out all day and didn't come home till half-past ten at night. Yes, the dear little lassie has agreed to take me and to wait for me for two years. I am sure I do not know what I have done to deserve so much happiness and I sometimes almost fear that I may have taken advantage of her soft and tender nature and got her to bestow her affections on me before she fully knows the value of such love as hers. And yet I hardly think so either for Janie is not one of these giddy-brained girls whose heads can be turned by a few attentions from the first man they meet and now that we are engaged I have perfect confidence that she won't forget me or grow indifferent during the many months of absence that are about to commence. I have told her however and I now tell you that if she ever find out that she has mistaken her feelings and repent of what she has said I hope she will not hesitate to say so and I will release her from her engagement for I would abhor myself if any selfishness on my part were to injure her happiness. Meanwhile I will try to do all I can to justify the trust which she and all of you have

### *India Called Them*

placed in me and to make up to her for the sacrifices she will make in leaving her home.

Poor thing, I wish that you were here with her and it is most natural that she should have written and asked you to have her taken home direct. However she is willing now to stop at Eyemouth on the way and though I have offered to take her straight down to Edinburgh she says now she would like to see Maggie and I am sure that except in her own home there is no place where she will meet more sympathy than in the Eyemouth Manse. We intend therefore going down to Berwick on the Wednesday and from thence driving out to Eyemouth. Maggie's great festival is the 24th and if you and Mrs. Howison do not object we will stay for it and come in on the Christmas Day in time for the dinner Mrs. Howison was kind enough to invite me to.

We called on Mrs. Gray yesterday and she was kind enough to ask us for our tea for tomorrow evening. I will also take Janie over tomorrow at 4 to Miss Walker who wants to see her and who is in distress at the death of her sister.

With kindest regards to Dr. Goldie, Mrs. Howison and yourself.

Believe me

My dear Mrs. Goldie

Yours very sincerely

H. Beveridge.

The letter of December 19, 1869, is Henry all over and forms a fitting end to the substance of this volume.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, GLOSSARIES AND NOTES ON ILLUSTRATIONS, PERSONS AND PLACES

My younger sister, now Mrs. R. H. Tawney, who appears in this book as Annette Jeanie, Jeannette, or Tutu, has contributed many personal reminiscences, the title chosen for the book and the painting of my mother as a child which has been used as cover. A number of the letters used here were written to her.

My cousin Millicent Dick, grand-daughter of Robert, the youngest child of David and Margaret Beveridge of Dunfermline, has provided me with most of the early letters used here; apart from her I had nothing of David or Margaret or of their son Henry of Inzievar, my grandfather.

My cousin John Beveridge, grandson of Erskine I, fifth child of David and Margaret, has provided me with letters and information to supplement the privately printed account of the Beveridge family for whose compilation his father Erskine II was responsible. He is also the owner of the portraits of David and Margaret, commissioned by Erskine I and reproduced here.

My cousin and step-daughter Elspeth Christian Mair, now Mrs. Richard Stanley Burn, great-grand-daughter of David Beveridge of Dumfries, copied many of Henry and Annette's letters for me.

From my cousin Mrs. Gwendolen Barringer, of Stirling West, South Australia, and from two other cousins with whom she put me in touch in South Australia—Stanley Beveridge Price, of Lower Mitcham, and Lewis Vence Jones, of Toorak Gardens—I have obtained information as to the numerous descendants in Australia and New Zealand of my great-aunt Elizabeth Beveridge, who married James Adamson, the wright of Crossgates, and who was the great-grand-mother of my three informants.

To Mrs. Shelley, now of Edinburgh, born Claudia Davidson and daughter of Ella Lucy Goldie, Jeanie's younger sister, I am indebted for the letter written by my father to Mrs. Goldie announcing his engagement to Jeanie, and also for the letter written by Jeanie from Barisal to Ella Lucy as a child. Both these letters are noted in the Postscript on Jeanie.

For my knowledge of William Akroyd's public career I am indebted almost wholly to the *Palfrey Collections*, that is to say, the many volumes of Press cuttings and other printed and MS. material for the history of the Western Midlands assembled by Mr. H. E. Palfrey at Stourbridge.

For such knowledge as I have of my mother's mother, Sarah



## *India Called Them*

Walford, and her father, and for some personal reminiscences of William Akroyd, I am indebted to my cousin, Henry Walford, formerly of Stourbridge, now living at Herne Bay.

From my cousin Oliver Danson North, elder son of my mother's half-sister Kate Lloyd, I have obtained a number of references to relations on that side.

### GLOSSARIES

My father's and mother's letters contain many words and phrases of languages other than English—Hindustani, Bengali, Latin, French, German—which they used to one another as part of their natural way of writing. I have printed these in the same type as the rest of the letters, as my father and mother wrote them, using italics in the letters only where the writers underlined for emphasis. I have given translations of most of the foreign words in Glossaries. Many Hindustani words, like ayah, nabob, tonga, have become so far part of the English language as to be included in popular dictionaries, such as Chambers' and Odhams', and for these words I have as a rule used the interpretations given in one or other of these dictionaries, printing the words themselves in roman letters in the Glossary, while putting other Hindustani or Bengali words in italics. The Hindustani words I have arranged alphabetically; the other foreign words according to the chapters in which they appear.

In the spelling of some of these words and of place-names there is considerable variety in the letters; my father wrote usually Rungpore and Bankipore, while my mother wrote usually Rangpur and Bankipur; these latter naturally appeared on any printed stationery which she obtained for Henry's use. I have made the spelling uniform throughout, on the lines of *The Times Atlas*, except in a few cases where I have left an old spelling, e.g. "Burrasaul" in one of Phemie's letters, as an indication of strangeness. I have adopted a uniform numerical dating of the letters, except where there seemed special reason for preserving the original form.

In his letters my father seldom used commas or question-marks; I have inserted commas only where this seemed necessary to avoid ambiguity; I have more commonly inserted question marks. I have printed capitals as he used them, so far as I was able to be sure whether he meant capitals or not. I have varied the spelling of personal names as he varied them.

#### Chapter

#### LATIN

II

omne ignotum pro magnifico

the unknown is always the most admired (Tacitus: *Agricola* 30).

## Glossary

Chapter		
VII	an me ludit amabilis, etc.	What pleasing frenzy cheats my ears and eyes! I seem to wander through sacred groves where gracious streams and airs are visitors.
VII	damnosa rupes	harmful rock.
VII	adhuc sub iudice lis est	The case is still before the Court.
VIII	facta haud verba	deeds not words.
VIII	solvitur ambulando	it is solved by walking. (The question whether a thing can be done is answered by doing it.)
VIII	quae cum ita sunt	Since these things are so.
IX	pater semper incertus	the father is always uncertain.
IX	locum tenens	a deputy.
IX	panem et somnum	bread and sleep.
IX	malleus munimentorum	Hammer of the Records. (Adaptation of "Malleus Hereticorum," a name given to Johann Faber for his attack on heretics, and of "Malleus Maleficarum," a book against witches.)
IX	amavimus amamus amabimus	we have loved, we love, we shall love.
IX	De Constantia Sapientis	The constancy of the wise. (Title of book by Seneca.)
IX	factum valet quod non fieri debuit	a thing which should never have been done, is valid when it has been done.
IX	magnum confecimus aequor	we have traversed a vast space of sea.
IX	O dura ilia caudicorum	Oh hard thews of pleaders. (Adaptation of Aeneas' address to his much-enduring crew.)
XII	totus teres atque rotundus	a man polished, complete and rounded.
XII	mutatis mutandis	with necessary changes.
XII	Bona Dea	old Roman deity of fruitfulness, the celebration of whose rites was confined to women.
XIII	rarae aves	rare birds (i.e. unusual persons).
XIV	non mihi tantam componere litem	It is not for me to settle so great an issue.
XIV	lacunae	gaps.
XVI	Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur	Trojan and Tyrian shall be treated alike by me. (Dido's offer to Aeneas when urging him to settle at Carthage. Virgil: <i>Aeneid</i> I. 576.)
XVIII	modus vivendi	a working agreement ( <i>literally</i> way of living).
XVIII	reductio ad absurdum	reduction to absurdity (a mode of proof much favoured by Euclid).
XVIII	justum et tenacem propositi virum	A man upright and tenacious of purpose.

## *India Called Them*

Epilogue	cruore nostro laudatores temporis acti laudatores temporis ficti	(bathed) in our blood. Praisers of things that were. Praisers of things that never were.
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### Chapter

### FRENCH

VII	eau sucré	sugared water.
VII	tête-à-tête	a confidential chat between two people alone.
VII	au bout des ongles	(a woman) to her finger-tips ( <i>literally</i> to the end of her nails).
VII	fleur de lys	lily.
IX	bon vivant	a jovial companion: one who lives well.
IX	n'importe	no matter.
IX	cause célèbre	a peculiarly notable trial.
IX	maîtresse femme	domineering woman.
XI	tres gentil	very polite.
XI	petit maître	something between a pedant and a prig.
XII	il y a question de femmes	women come into the case.

### GERMAN

VII	Kennst du das Land	"Knowest thou the land."
VII	eine fürchterliche Fortschritting	alarming advance.
IX	Das Gute liegt so nahe	the good lies so near to us.
XI	zu frei	too free.
XI	gleichgültig	casual, careless.
XI	Dreieiniger Gott	Triune God.
XI	wunderschön	wonderfully beautiful.
XI	philosophiert	philosophises.
XII	allerliebste Fräulein	most beloved miss (i.e. governess).
XII	Hosenträger	braces.

### HINDUSTANI

Words sufficiently anglicised to appear in dictionaries of the English language are printed in roman type. The spelling is that used by my father or mother. Two Bengali words are included here for convenience.

*Accha*: good.

*Almirah*: wardrobe.

*Am mammako pia karta*: a child's greeting to her mother implying a desire to be cuddled.

*Anna*: an Indian coin, the sixteenth part of a rupee.

*Ayah*: a native Indian waiting-maid or nurse-maid.

*Bacha*: small.

*Bakshish*: Backsheesh: a gift or present of money in the East; a gratuity or tip.

*Banian* or *banyan*: a Hindu trader, esp. from Guzerat, and loosely, out of India, any Hindu: a native Indian broker or financier.

*Bawaḥi*: cook.

*Bhangi* or *bahangi*: bamboo stick with ropes hanging from each end to carry buckets or packages, placed across shoulder.

*Bheestie*: a water-carrier.

*Bil* or *Bhil*: water course.

*Biroheramal* (Bengali): fire of separation.

*Charpoy*: the common Indian bedstead, sometimes handsomely wrought and painted.

## Glossary

- Chatty*: an earthen pot.  
*Chokidar*: watchman.  
*Chokra*: boy in garden or house.  
*Chota haṛree*: small breakfast.  
*Chuprassi*: office messenger.  
*Chur*: a strip of land.  
*Cutcherry*: a courthouse.  
*Dak*: the mail-post, or post office.  
*Dangat*: kind of official.  
*Dandy*: an open palanquin.  
*Darwan* or *Durwan*: doorkeeper. Used also for steward.  
*Dhobi*: an Indian washerman.  
*Dhootie*: loin-cloth.  
*Dirzi* or *Durzee*: tailor.  
*Doolie* or *Dhooly*: a covered litter.  
*Ghaut*: Ghat: a mountain-pass; landing-stairs for bathers in river or tank.  
*Godown*: a store for goods. Used also as servants' quarters.  
*Golmal*: disturbance.  
*Jampan*: a sedan-chair borne on bamboo poles by four bearers.  
*Khal*: a creek.  
*Khansamah*: butler.  
*Khitmutgar*: a table-servant.  
*Lao*: come, or give.  
*Mali*: gardener.  
*Manjis*: master of a vessel.  
*Masalchi*: a table or kitchen servant employed to clean plates, etc. Also a lamp or torch-bearer.  
*Mauud*: a measure of weight in India, its value varying in different places from about 25 to about 85 pounds avoirdupois.  
*Maulvi*: teacher or expounder of Mahomedan law.  
*Mekta*: sweeper.  
*Mistree*: carpenter.  
*Morah*: wicker stool.  
*Munsiff*: an official.  
*Nabob*: a deputy or governor under the Mogul Empire: a European who has enriched himself in the East.  
*Nazir*: a native official in the Anglo-Indian court who serves summonses.  
*Palki*: Palkṛe: a palanquin.  
*Pice*: a copper coin— $\frac{1}{4}$  anna.  
*Pipul*: the sacred fig-tree; also Pipal, Pippul-tree, Peepul-tree.  
*Puggaree*: scarf worn round the hat to keep off the sun.  
*Puja*: rites of Hindu worship. Durga-Puja: a ten days' Hindu festival at the autumnal equinox in honour of Durga, wife of Siva the Destroyer. An occasion for annual holidays.  
*Pukka*: first-class, genuine.  
*Pundit*: a person who is learned in the language, science, laws and religion of India; any learned man.  
*Punkah*: Punka: a large fan for cooling the air of an Indian house, consisting of a light framework covered with cloth and suspended from the ceiling of a room, worked by pulling a cord or by machinery.  
*Ranee*: A Hindu queen or princess.  
*Rēzai*: bed or rug.  
*Rupee*: a standard silver coin of India originally worth 2/-, worth about  $\frac{1}{4}$  from 1897 to 1920.  
*Ryot*: a Hindu cultivator or peasant.  
*Sari*: a Hindu woman's chief garment, consisting of a long piece of silk or cotton cloth wrapped round the middle.

## *India Called Them*

*Seer*: weight of about 2 lb., used also as a measure of milk.

*Shigram*: conveyance of some kind.

*Shutuschil* (Bengali): cowardice as of a camel.

*Sirdar*: a chief or head; a major-domo.

*Syce*: *Sice*: a groom.

*Taktaposh*: a covered stage or platform of planks.

*Tamasha*: an entertainment, show.

*Tana* or *Thana*: police-station.

*Tehsildar*: rent collector.

*Ticca gharry*: cab for hire.

*Tom-tom*: kind of carriage.

*Tonga*: a light two-wheeled cart for four in use in India.

*Vakil*: *Vakeel*: a native attorney or agent in the East Indies.

*Wallah*: *Walla*: a fellow. *Competition wallah*: a term applied in Anglo-Indian colloquial speech to a member of the Civil Service who obtained appointment by the competitive system instituted in 1855.

### NOTE ON ILLUSTRATIONS

The cover, representing Annette Akroyd in early childhood with a dog, is from a water-colour given by Annette's sister Fanny to Annette's daughter Annette Jeanie (Tutu) on the occasion of her marriage to Richard Henry Tawney in June 1909.

The frontispiece represents Henry and Annette in March 1875, just before their marriage in Calcutta.

The photographs of Henry's grand-parents David Beveridge and his wife Margaret Thomson at p. 22 are from paintings made on the order of their son Erskine about 1829 and now in the possession of Erskine's grandson John. The paintings are referred to by Jemima Beveridge at p. 20.

Jeanie (p. 54). Date uncertain but no doubt about the time of her marriage in 1871, when she was 17.

Jeanie's Indian Home (p. 55). This is the Judge's House in Barisal described in Ch. IV.

William Akroyd (p. 86). Date uncertain but presumably about 1865 when he would be just over 60.

Annette (p. 87). This is from a medallion made in 1865 when she was 22. The medallion was given by her to her son William and has figured in many photographs of him.

Miss Akroyd's School (p. 118). This was taken in March 1875, just before Annette's marriage. One at least of those in the front row is a mistress. Some of the girls appear to have adopted the hybrid costume proposed by Annette (p. 90 *n.*).

Henry (p. 150). This is the earliest surviving portrait, of date uncertain, but probably between the death of Jeanie and before his meeting with Annette.

Judge's House, Bankipur (p. 214). This was Henry and Annette's

### *Note on Persons*

most lasting home in India—for  $3\frac{1}{4}$  years from December 1879 to March 1883.

Trio at Southport (p. 246). Taken in May 1885, when the three children were 8, 6 and  $4\frac{1}{2}$ .

Jemima at 88 (p. 278). Probably taken during the family's stay at Keavil 1883-84 in Jemima's 89th year.

Herman Beveridge (p. 310). This is an enlargement of Herman from a group of the family taken by Henry Turner at Ilfracombe in July 1890 when Herman was  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years old.

Pitfold, Hindhead (p. 342). This shows the new front, with porch and tower designed and built by Annette in 1900. On the left is the gardener's cottage in which Henry and Annette spent most of World War I.

The Beresford portraits of Annette and Henry at pp. 374-75 were taken during a stay in their son's house in London, in 1913.

#### NOTE ON PERSONS

Brief particulars are given here of some of the people particularly mentioned in this volume. They are a sample of what has gone to the making of India under British occupation: Indians and English; religious reformers, lawyers, administrators, scholars, judges; servants of the East India Company from Haileybury and "competition wallahs" of the I.C.S.; men appointed to high office, judicial or administrative, direct from Britain; men who made great careers and men who did not; David Hare, whom my father described as unique; men whom India caught and men to whom she remained eternally alien.

The notes include two women only—Emily Phear and Elizabeth Adelaide Manning; India has not been a place where women have played much part hitherto. But there are two other women who might be in the notes if more particulars were known of them. There was the bountiful Maharani Surnamoye (one of the supporters of Miss Akroyd's school). There was Roma Bai, who set herself to get better care for mothers in childbirth and whom both Henry and Annette befriended; in the end she came to grief and Henry in one of his letters included her (with Annie Goldie, Nellie Akroyd and Fräulein Gause) in a list of four young women with whom "alas—none of our experiments have been successful. But for all that let us persevere and not sink into cynicism." (19/6/88).

In preparing these notes I have naturally had recourse among other authorities to the *Dictionary of Indian Biography*, published by C. E. Buckland in 1906. Comments placed in quotation marks without other source named are from this dictionary.

## *India Called Them*

### **AMIR ALI, SYAD**

*b. 6/4/49.* Barrister Inner Temple 1873, practised in Calcutta High Court; Magistrate 1878- ; Judge in Calcutta High Court 1890-1904. Strong advocate of English education and education of Indian women. Mahomedan. Author of numerous books and articles. Married an Englishwoman.

### **BANERJI, Sir GURU DAS**

*b. 26/1/44.* Law Lecturer and Barrister practising in Calcutta High Court 1872- ; Judge in High Court 1888- ; Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University 1890-93.

### **BAYLEY, Sir STEUART COLVIN**

(1836-1925). Eton and Haileybury, arrived India March 1856. Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal 1879 and 1887-90. Member of India Council 1895-1905.

### **BROWNE, JOHN FREDERICK**

I.C.S. Arrived India January 1856.

### **CAMPBELL, FRANCIS JOHNSTON GRAHAM**

I.C.S. Arrived India January 1864. Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector officiating as District and Sessions Judge Rangpur May 1879. Seems never to have risen higher than this. Innumerable stations, including Mymensing, Sylhet, Patna, Bakarganj, Faridpur, Birbhum, Rajshahi, Murshidabad, 24 Pergunnahs, Chittagong and others held by or offered to Henry Beveridge. Last recorded as taking furlough May 1890.

### **CAMPBELL, Sir GEORGE**

(1824-1892). Son of Sir George Campbell of E.I. Co's Medical Service. Haileybury. Served in India 1842-74, last three years as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. M.P. Kirkcaldy 1875-92 but "not successful as a politician." Wrote Autobiography and other works.

### **CHARLES, JOHN GEORGE**

I.C.S. Arrived India December 1865. Temporary Additional District and Sessions Judge 24 Pergunnahs 1884-85. Last recorded as District and Sessions Judge Shahabad 1890.

### **COCKERELL, HORACE ABEL**

(1833-1908). Eton and Haileybury. Arrived India 1853. Secretary to Bengal Government 1877-82. C.S.I. retired 1887.

### **COTTON, Sir HENRY**

(1845-1917). I.C.S. Arrived India 1867. Under-Secretary to Government of India 1873. Chief Secretary 1891-96. Chief Commissioner of Assam 1896-1902. After retirement and

### *Note on Persons*

K.C.S.I. in 1902 became Liberal M.P. for Nottingham East 1906-10. See pages 390-94.

**DAS, DURGA MOHAN**

(1838-1897). Son of barrister with large practice at Barisal. Became barrister himself, practising at Barisal and Calcutta. Religious and social reformer, active in promoting re-marriage of Hindu widows, in face of bitter opposition. On Committee of Miss Akroyd's School.

**EDEN, The Hon. Sir ASHLEY**

(1831-1887). Third son of 3rd Lord Auckland. Rugby, Winchester and Haileybury. Arrived India 1852. Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal 1877-82. K.C.S.I. (1878). "Though last in his term at Haileybury, he was one of the ablest officers of modern times; his common sense and penetration were combined with fearlessness and force in the statement of his views."

**EDGAR, Sir JOHN WARE**

(1839-1902). I.C.S. Arrived India 1862. Chief Secretary to Government of Bengal 1887-91. K.C.I.E. 1889. Retired 1892. "Devoted himself in his later years to historical studies, chiefly on subjects connected with Northern Buddhism and modern Latin Christianity."

**GARTH, Sir RICHARD**

(1820-1893). Eton and Ch.Ch. Cricketer, Barrister. Conservative M.P. for Guildford 1866-68. Chief Justice of Bengal 1875-86. Privy Councillor 1889. After retirement wrote: *A Few Plain Truths about India*.

**GHOSE, MAN MOHAN**

(1844-1896). Failed for I.C.S. in England 1864 and 1865; barrister practising in Calcutta High Court from 1867. Founded *Indian Mirror* 1861. Lectured against open competitive examination. Secretary of Bethune College 1873. Several visits to England. On his death a Memorial Fund, with Lady Phear and Annette Beveridge as hon.-secretaries, was raised and used to buy about 200 books for Bethune College.

**GRIERSON, Sir GEORGE ABRAHAM**

(1851-1941). I.C.S. Arrived India 1873. In Rangpur 1876, Bankipur 1882. In charge of Linguistic Survey 1898-1902. Retired 1903. Many learned writings and academic honours. K.C.I.E. 1912. O.M. 1928.

**GUPTA, Sir KRISHNA GOVINDA**

(1851-1926). Born at Bhatpara in Dacca district. I.C.S., entering by examination in England. Arrived India October 1873; posted



### *India Called Them*

Bakarganj. Secretary to Board of Revenue 1888- . Commissioner of Excise, Bengal 1890; Commissioner of Orissa 1901- ; first Indian member of Board of Revenue 1905; one of two first Indian members of Indian Council 1908. K.C.S.I. 1911. Prominent member of Brahmo Samaj.

HALLIDAY, FREDERICK MYTTON

I.C.S. Arrived India October 1856. Commissioner Patna 1878-84.

HARE, DAVID

(1775-1842). Brought up as watchmaker, went to Calcutta 1800, acquired a competence and retired from business 1816. An enthusiastic promoter of English education of Indians, opened Hindu College in 1817; founded Calcutta School Book Society for printing and publishing English and Bengali books 1818; worked hard for repeal of Regulations against the Press; to secure trial by jury in Civil Cases; to prevent emigration of Indian labourers to Mauritius and Bourbon. Died of cholera. Full size marble statue between Presidency College and Hare School.

HARRISON, Sir HENRY

(1837-1892). I.C.S. Arrived India 1860. Secretary to Board of Revenue 1878. Commissioner of Police and Chairman of Calcutta Corporation 1881-90. Died of cholera at Chittagong.

HEELEY, WILFRED

I.C.S. Entered by first open competitive examination 1855 (was scholar of Trinity, Cambridge, with high academic prospects). Registrar-General of Bengal 1864- and Inspector-General of Jails 1871-76, making striking reforms in each post. Henry Beveridge "went to say good-bye" to him April 13, 1876, and he died ten days later.

HUNTER, Sir WILLIAM WILSON

(1840-1900). I.C.S. Arrived India 1861. Retired K.C.S.I. 1887. Planned and conducted statistical survey of India 1869-85. Author of many works. See pages 390-94.

LIVESAY, JOHN JAMES

I.C.S. Arrived India November 1867. Magistrate and Collector at Rangpur 1877-82, thereafter Bogra.

LUTIMAN-JOHNSON, HENRY

I.C.S. Arrived India 1867. Private Secretary to Lieutenant-Governor 1872. Judge and Commissioner Assam Valley 1886-92.

MACDONNELL, ANTONY PATRICK

(1844-1925). I.C.S. Arrived India 1865. Secretary to Government of India 1886-88. Lieutenant-Governor of North-Western

### *Note on Persons*

Provinces and Oudh 1895-98. Remarkable for famine administration. Permanent Under-Secretary in Dublin 1902-8. Raised to peerage 1908.

**MANNING, ELIZABETH ADELAIDE**

(1828-1905). Studied at Bedford College 1850. One of the original students of Girton College, at Hitchin 1869. Dedicated last 35 years of her life to the interests of India, excluding religion and politics. Hon. secretary and treasurer of London Branch of National Indian Association 1870-77. General secretary of National Indian Association 1877-1905 in succession to Mary Carpenter. Particularly interested in providing medical women for India. Visited India for first time at age of 60, and for second time at age of 71, inspecting schools, colleges and other institutions. Received Kaiser-i-Hind medal 1904. Left four volumes of Indian diaries.

**MERES, WILLIAM FITZPATRICK**

I.C.S. Arrived India November 1864. Retired as District and Sessions Judge 1889. Visited Annette and family in Ilfracombe 1890.

**MONRO, JAMES**

(1838-1920). I.C.S. Entered by same examination as Henry Beveridge, became Inspector-General of Police. Retired 1883 and became Assistant Commissioner of Metropolitan Police in London 1884 and Chief Commissioner and C.B. 1888. Resigned 1890, and returned to India to start medical mission. See pages 390-94.

**NORRIS, JOHN FREEMAN**

(1842-1904). Barrister 1865 western circuit. Contested unsuccessfully Wilton as Radical 1877 and Portsmouth 1880. Judge in Calcutta High Court 1882-95.

**PHEAR, EMILY (Lady)**

(1836-1897). Promoter of education: in Bengal among women, becoming in 1873 treasurer and secretary of Miss Akroyd's School, and in Devonshire on settling there. Solely responsible for starting University Extension Lectures in Exmouth.

**PHEAR, Sir JOHN BUDD**

(1825-1905). Fellow and Lecturer, Clare College, Cambridge. Barrister (Inner Temple) 1854. Judge in Calcutta High Court 1864-76. Chief Justice of Ceylon 1877-79. Retired and settling at Exmouth was unsuccessful Liberal candidate for Parliament. Author of *The Aryan Village in India and International Trade*.

**RAMPINI, ROBERT FULTON**

I.C.S. Arrived India November 1864. Officiating appointment to Calcutta High Court April 1888. Still in service 1902.

## *India Called Them*

### RIPON, Marquis of

(1827–1909). Viceroy 1880–84. M.P. for various constituencies 1852–59. Ministerial Posts, including India, War, Lord President of Council, and on return from India First Lord of Admiralty 1886 and Secretary for Colonies 1892–95. As Viceroy repealed Vernacular Press Act; extended Local Self-Government; introduced “Ilbert Bill.”

### ROY, RAJAH RAM MOHAN

(1772–1833). Religious reformer. At age of 15 published famous work on *Idolatry*. Entered Government service but retired in 1813; began crusade against errors of popular religion, starting Brahmo Samaj. Visiting England in 1833, was befriended by Brougham, Bentham and Campbell. Died in that year while planning voyage to America.

### SEN, KESHUB CHUNDER

(1838–1884). Religious Reformer. Joined Brahmo Samaj 1857 and started a “progressive” section. In 1866 delivered address giving impression that he was about to adopt Christianity, and 1870 visited England, being welcomed by nearly all denominations, but in his final address declared himself farther from English Christians, not nearer to them. Secured in 1872 passage of Brahmo Marriage Act checking child marriage, but later married his daughter to son of Maharajah of Cooch Behar, both being under the age fixed by the Act. Died in January 1884 “leaving many bitter enemies and many warm friends.” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica* article.)

### THOMPSON, Sir AUGUSTUS RIVERS

(1829–1890). Eton and Haileybury. Arrived India 1850. Secretary to Bengal Government 1869–75. Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal 1882–87. Strongly opposed “Ilbert Bill” introduced by Lord Ripon in 1883, and helped to secure modification of this measure.

### WARD, Sir WILLIAM ERSKINE

(1838–1916). I.C.S. Arrived India 1861. Chief Commissioner in Assam 1883 and 1885, 1891–96. K.C.S.I. 1896.

### WILLIAMSON, Sir WALTER JAMES FRANKLIN

(1867– ). In Burma Police from June 1888. Entered Indian Financial Department 1890. Financial Adviser to Government of Thailand 1904–25. Financial Advisor to Government of Estonia 1926–30. Kt. 1927. Grand Cross of White Elephant of Siam 1916.

## NOTE ON PLACES

Culross, Low Valleyfield, Torry and Torryburn, in that order from west to east, lie along three miles of the coast road from Kincardine to Dunfermline, on the north shore of the Forth between the Kincardine and Queensferry bridges. The first of them, Culross, is a small town with a long history, the seat of a monastery; the other three places are villages. All four come into the story of the House of B. Most of the other places mentioned in that story lie a few miles inland from the Forth on its north side or like Bothkennar and Linlithgow just south, across the new Kincardine Bridge.

At Culross was St. Mungo's, the last home of Aunt Jane and of Henry the elder, and after their deaths in 1863 for twenty years the home of Henry's widow, Jemima, with her children Phemie, David, and from 1882, Maggie.

Low Valleyfield was the first home of Henry the elder and Jemima; there their three elder children David, Phemie and Maggie were born.

At Torry was the seat of Sir William Erskine after whom Erskine I, founder of the rich branch of the House of B, was named.

Durham, Torryburn, was the last home of Jemima to which she, with her three attendant children, moved in 1883 and where she died in 1885.

A mile and a half south-east of Torryburn along the shore is Crombie Point, to which Phemie retired with her owls and other birds to be independent after Jemima's death.

Just north of these places, a mile and a half inland in woods, is the old Inzievar, where the Henry of this record was born, now re-named Fernwoodlea, while a little farther inland is the modern Inzievar. Just north and east of this on the direct road from Alloa to Dunfermline is Carnock, where Aunt Jane once made her home. Blair Castle, the seat of Alexander Alison, Henry's opponent in the East of Scotland Malleable Iron Company (pp. 13-14), lies just west of Carnock; in modern maps it is Blair *House*, and is, of course, different from the Blair Castle of Perthshire.

All these places are within seven miles of Dunfermline, the starting-point of the House of B. All are almost wholly rural, with a population declining through most of the nineteenth century. The mines and industries of Fife lie east of them, as does the naval base of Rosyth.



## INDEX

*Names marked with an asterisk [\*] appear on the insert facing page 16 as well as on the pages indicated.*

*Page numbers in italics give references to biographical notes.*

- Abercrombie, Mrs., 259  
 Abul-Fazl, 351-2, 353, 366  
 Adamson, Adam, 9, 21 n., 212  
 Adamson, David B., 9  
 Adamson, Elizabeth,\* 9, 21 n., 397  
 Aden, 323  
 Adie, Lily, 47  
 "Administration of Justice in Bengal,"  
     233, 381  
 Agnosticism, H. B.'s, 44-5, 341-2  
 Agra, 358-9  
 Akbar, 351, 361  
*Akbar-Nama*, 351-2, 367  
 Akroyd, Annette Susannah, *see* Bever-  
     idge, Annette  
 Akroyd, Eliza, 75, 77  
 Akroyd, Fanny Louisa, *see* Mowatt,  
     Fanny Louisa  
 Akroyd, Helen [Nellie], *see* Fowler,  
     Helen  
 Akroyd, James, 64, 378  
 Akroyd, James, the second, 75  
 Akroyd, James, the third, 76  
 Akroyd, Kate Lloyd, *see* North, Kate  
 Akroyd, Lucy Ann, 75  
 Akroyd, Mary, *see* Bates, Mary  
 Akroyd, Mary Anne, 75, 77, 81-2,  
     132, 255-6, 284  
 Akroyd, Sarah, 75, 397-8  
 Akroyd, Sarah Ellen, 75  
 Akroyd, William, 4, 5, 63 ff., 75 ff.,  
     81, 92, 378, 380  
 Akroyd, William, Rector of Marston,  
     63  
 Akroyd, William, the second, 75  
 Akroyd, William Edward, 76, 132,  
     266, 378  
 Alastor, 39  
*Alfred*, S. S., 35  
 Algebra, 165, 174  
 Ali Jan, 197, 198, 300, 359-60  
 Alipur [Alipore], 300, 335  
 Alison, Alexander, 13-14  
 Allen, Alicia, 325, 328, 337  
 Amir Ali, 360, 404  
 Amphictyonic Council, 3, 288  
 Amroha, Nawab of, 357  
 Anglo-Indian Defence Association,  
     250  
*Annals of Rural Bengal*, 334  
 Antari, 353  
 Anti-Corn-Law League, 69  
 Apollo, 25  
 Aristotle, 36  
 Arnold, Matthew, 3, 171, 173, 288  
 Arrah, 298-9  
 Assam, 172-3  
 Aubrey, Mrs., 82, 86, 87  
 Auckland, Lord, 260  
 Austen, Jane, 4, 28, 33, 375  
 Australia, 155, 209, 212  
 Avebury, 335  
*Babur-Nama*, 351, 366  
 Badaoni, 314  
 Bai, Roma, 154, 176, 245, 403  
 Bakarganj, 53 ff., 144  
*Ballarat*, S. S., 278  
 Balloon, 306  
 Ballygunge, 274, 297 ff., 360  
 Balzac, H. de, 246  
 Banerjee [Banerji], [Sir] Guru Das,  
     86, 404  
 Bankipur, 153, 192, 195, 209 ff., 261-2,  
     360  
*Banner of Ulster*, 15  
 Barclay, George, 121  
 Barisal, 53, 54, 57, 144, 316  
*Baroda*, S. S., 143  
 Barringer, Mrs. Gwendolen, 397  
 Bates, James, *see* Akroyd, James  
 Bates, John, 64  
 Bates, Mary, 64  
 Baths, cold, 22  
 Batley, 63  
 Baylee, Miss, 286  
 Bayley, Sir S. C., 170, 179, 404  
 Bean, Poppy, 200-1  
 Bedford College, 78-9, 80  
 Belfast, 15, 17  
 Bell, Margaret,\* 11, 12, 19, 22, 27,  
     29-33, 35, 41, 49, 50, 123, 125,  
     131, 235-6, 270-2, 324-6, 329,  
     338, 390  
 Bell, Stephen,\* 22, 29-30, 49, 50, 53,  
     235, 270, 390  
 Belloc, Bessie R. P., 87

## *India Called Them*

- Bengal, S. S.*, 323  
*Bensleys, the*, 60  
*Bentinck, Lord William*, 175  
*Berhampore*, 337 ff.  
*Between the Ochils and the Forth*, 27  
*Beveridge, Alexander W.* ["Allie"],\*  
 11, 12, 17, 22, 27, 28, 30-2,  
 35, 37, 39, 41, 49, 50, 102, 236,  
 238, 270, 340, 368  
*Beveridge, Amelia*,\* 42  
*Beveridge, Annette Jeanie* [Jeannette],\*  
 153-4, 200-1, 226-7, 232-4, 238,  
 365, *et passim*  
*Beveridge, Annette Susannah*,\* 60-1,  
 70, 72, 75-7; at college, 78-9;  
 80 ff.; goes to India, 86 ff.; meets  
 H. B., 95 ff.; marriage, 109 ff.;  
 first child born, 151; children,  
 153; cholera, 163; in London,  
 241 ff.; fourth child born, 267;  
 leaves India, 322; death, 368;  
 character, 372 ff.; *et passim*  
*Beveridge, David, the first*,\* 7-8, 10,  
 20, 378-80  
*Beveridge, David, the second*,\* 9-10,  
 41  
*Beveridge, David, the third*,\* 11, 12,  
 19, 22, 25-8, 32-3, 42, 49, 50,  
 53 n., 102, 118, 131, 235, 236,  
 238, 270-1, 329, 349, 368  
*Beveridge, Elizabeth*, *see* Adamson,  
 Elizabeth  
*Beveridge, Elizabeth* ["Libbie"], 102,  
 236  
*Beveridge, Erskine, the first*,\* 8, 10, 20,  
 42, 102, 172, 379  
*Beveridge, Erskine, the second*,\* 16,  
 25 n., 41-2, 397  
*Beveridge, Euphemia S.*,\* 11, 12, 23,  
 26, 28-9, 32, 41, 42, 46, 49, 50,  
 52-3, 59, 116, 235, 270-2, 326,  
 338, 368  
*Beveridge, Friar*, 118  
*Beveridge, Henry, the elder*,\* 10 ff., 31,  
 33, 41, 49, 118-19  
*Beveridge, Henry*,\* the younger; born,  
 11, 12; at eleven, 14-15; educa-  
 tion, 16-17; enters Indian service,  
 17; influence of parents, 24-5;  
 sails for India, 35-7; early  
 assignments there, 38 ff.; views on  
 Indian government, 42 ff.; reli-  
 gious views, 44 ff.; on home  
 furlough, 49; meets Jeanie, 50 ff.;  
 returns to India, 52; first marriage,  
 53; meets A. B., 95 ff.; second  
 marriage, 109 ff.; on furlough,  
 234 ff.; leaves India, 347; revisits  
 India, 352 ff.; in World War I,  
 366; death, 368-9; character,  
 372 ff.; *et passim*  
*Beveridge, Herman*,\* 267, 277, 297 ff.,  
 317-18, 322 ff., 333, *et passim*  
*Beveridge, Jeanie*,\* 50 ff., 59 ff., 102,  
 105, 107, 112, 116, 127-8, 172,  
 216, 221-2, 245, 267, 316, 368,  
 395-6  
*Beveridge, Jemima*,\* 4, 10 ff.; wit,  
 19-21; literary tastes, 21; educa-  
 tion, 21; fretfulness, 22-3; and  
 her children, 24 ff.; 41, 49, 118-  
 19, 131, 177, 235, 269-71  
*Beveridge, John*,\* 9  
*Beveridge, John, the second*, 397  
*Beveridge, Laetitia Santamani*,\* 147,  
 151, 153-7, 162, 164, 168, 218-19,  
 237-8, 281, 349, *et passim*  
*Beveridge, Louisa*, 238  
*Beveridge, Margaret*,\* 8, 20, 380  
*Beveridge, Margaret T.*, *see* Bell, Mar-  
 garet  
*Beveridge, Robert*,\* 10, 14, 15, 41,  
 379  
*Beveridge, William Henry* [Lord],\* 43,  
 52, 68, 153, 165, 182, 218-19,  
 237-8, 285, 319, 321-2, 329, 365,  
*et passim*  
*Beveridge Varia*, 308  
*Beverley, Mr.*, 120  
*Bhaia*, *see* Beveridge, William Henry  
*Bhasrapur*, 339  
*Bhopal*, 353, 355  
*Bhutan*, 38  
*Bible, H. B. on the*, 46-7 •  
*Bicycle, H. B. and*, 335-6, 339  
*Bingfield*, 241, 256, 278  
*Birbhum*, 334  
*Bisheshwar* [Hurree], 198, 206-7, 328  
*Blackie and Sons*, 15-16, 23, 25, 26  
*Blake, William*, 181  
*Bogmonia*, 198, 221, 273, 277, 279, 281,  
 297, 298-9, 300  
*Bogra*, 145 ff.  
*Bombay*, 353, 354, 356  
*Borthwick, Lord*, 336  
*Bose, N.*, 90  
*Bothkennar*, 11, 409  
*Bradbury, Mrs.*, 60  
*Braddon, Miss*, 171  
*Brahmo Public Opinion*, 166-7  
*Brahmo Samaj*, 83  
*Brierley Hill Advertiser*, 92

## Index

- Bright, John, 45, 69  
 Brock, Meta, 82, 86  
 Brumpton Square, 239  
 Brontë, Emily, 29  
 Brooke, Stopford, 140  
 Brougham, Lord, 173  
 Browne, John F., 261, 404  
 Browning, Robert, 93, 118, 170, 177  
 Bucher, Frl., 302  
 Buchwald, Dr., 282, 292  
 Buddhas, 334-5, 350  
 Burn, Mrs. R. S., 397  
 Burns, Robert, 179  
 Buss, Frances, 87  
 Busteed, H. E., 203 n.
- Calcutta, 88-9, 272 ff., 317, 353, 354, 360  
*Calcutta Review*, 45, 233, 290, 343  
 Calvin, 12, 16  
 Cambridge, 133  
 Cambyse's Army, 171  
 Camel riding, H. B. on, 358  
 Campbell, [Sir] George, 100, 404  
 Campbell, F. J. G., 160, 162, 404  
 Canova, 176  
 Carlyle, Thomas, 6, 106, 175, 247  
 Carpenter, Miss, 99  
 Casaubon, Dr., 36, 376  
 Cassimbazar, 340  
 Cataract, A. B.'s operation for, 366  
 Chamberlain, Joseph, 285  
 Chander, Rum, 171  
 Charles, J. G., 261, 404  
 Chatterjee, Ram Chandra, 306, 315  
 Chaucer, 47  
 Chesterfield, Lord, 334  
 Chittagong, 261  
 Chocolate, 345  
 Cholera, 162-3  
 Church attendance, H. B. and, 309-11  
 Churji, 323, 325, 329  
 Civil Service Commissioners, 36  
 Clifton, 324  
 Clive, 344, 370  
 Close, Miss, 286-7  
 Clyde, Falls of, 20  
 Cobb, Dr., 318, 322  
 Cobbe, Francis Power, 87  
 Cobden, Richard, 69  
 Cockerell, H. A., 167, 169-70, 179, 404  
 Colenso, Bishop, 46  
 Collinson, 213, 218, 363  
 Colonel, the English, 244-5  
 Comet, 225-6
- "Competition wallahs," 37  
*Comprehensive History of India*, 16, 43  
 Comte, Auguste, 101, 106, 191, 231  
 Concertina, 40, 341  
 Congreve, Dr., 393  
 Cooch Behar, 38, 39; *see also* Kuch Behar  
 Cotton, Sir Henry, 40, 250, 336, 391-3, 394, 404-5  
 Cowper, William, 13  
 Crimean War, 71  
 Criminals, H. B. and, 304  
 Croft, The, 335-6, 349  
 Crombie, Dr., 346  
 Cromwell, Oliver, 71  
 Culross, 15, 26-7, 32, 133-4, 234 ff., 409  
*Culross and Tulliallan*, 27  
 Culross Temperance Society, 52  
 Cummin, Ellen, 214-15, 226  
 Curzon, Lord and Lady, 355
- Dacca, 38, 40  
 Dalhousie, Lord, 175  
 Darjeeling, 154, 155 ff., 299 ff.  
 Das, Durga Mohan, 90, 91, 100, 186-9, 405  
 Davidson, Claudia, *see* Mrs. Shelley  
 Dawson, Helen, 20  
 Dawson, William, 20  
 Deafness, A. B.'s, 136, 178, 179, 202, 242, 252-3, 281, 365  
 Degrees, University, women and, 78  
 Dendy, Hetty, 287, 300, 301, 309  
 Dendy, Mr., 134-5  
 Derby, H. B. at the, 49  
 Dick, Millicent, 397  
 Dickens, Charles, 37, 375  
*Dilemma, The*, 143  
 Dilke, Sir Charles, 376  
 Dilkusha, 300, 335  
 Disraeli, Benjamin, 127  
*District of Bakarganj*, *see History*  
 "Divine Mind," 134-5  
 Dogs, pariah, 200  
 Donaldson, Dr., 36  
 Drains, 329-30  
 Dress, Indian, A. B. and, 90  
 Dryden, John, 24, 177, 285-6  
 Duddingston, 15  
 Dunfermline, 7, 21, 409  
 Durham, 238, 269-70, 272, 409
- Earrings, 112, 113, 115, 146, 295, 316  
 Ear-trumpet, *see* Deafness



## *India Called Them*

- East, Timothy, 25  
 Eastbourne, 324 ff., 335, 349  
 East India Company, 17, 35  
 East of Scotland Malleable Iron Co.,  
     13  
 Eden, Sir Ashley, 405  
 Eden Gardens, 260-1  
 Edgar, Sir John W., 261, 405  
 Edward VIII, as Prince of Wales, 366  
 Elephant, 147  
 Eliot, George, 5, 36, 124, 172, 251, 375  
 Engine, ride on, 148  
*Englishman, The*, 58, 228, 234, 247,  
     260  
 Erskine, Sir W., 8  
*Essay on Decision of Character* (Foster),  
     33, 343  
 Evers, Emma, 257  
 Examinations, for Indian Service, 36,  
     314-15  
 Eyemouth, 29-30, 131
- Faridpur, 153, 196, 261 ff., 384-5  
 Fenians, 254  
 Field, 249  
 Floods, 266-7  
 Forster, E. M., 386  
 Foster, 33, 343  
 Fowler, Helen, 76, 132, 172, 255,  
     256-7, 261, 265-6, 403  
 Franchise Bill, 254  
 Francis, Sir Philip, 202  
 "Fräuleins," 213, 236-7, 300, 302  
*Full Employment in a Free Society*, 68
- Galashiels, 15  
 Garth, Sir Richard, 287, 405  
 Gaskell, Mrs., 64  
 Gauhati, 191-2, 312  
 Gaunt, Elizabeth, 305  
 Gause, Frl., 213, 215-16, 226, 234, 403  
 Geddes, Prof., 49  
 George IV, 12  
 Gessi, 247  
 Ghose, Monmohan, 61, 86, 88, 91,  
     97, 100-1, 166, 229, 315, 405  
 Gibbon, Edward, 37, 361  
 Gladstone, W. E., 36, 177, 285, 311,  
     342  
 Glasgow, 15, 16  
 Goethe, 123  
 Gogram, 198  
 Goldie, Annie, 53 n., 128, 212, 255-6,  
     403
- Goldie, Eliza C., 28, 50, 52-3, 59-61,  
     87, 95, 97, 102-3, 123, 128, 131,  
     172, 212, 353, 395-6  
 Goldie, James, 27  
 Goldie, Jane Howison, *see* Beveridge,  
     Jeanie  
 Goldie, William, 50  
 Gordon, General, 247  
 Gordon, Judge, 315  
 Governesses, German, *see* Fräuleins  
 Grantown-on-Spey, 336  
 Great College Street, 133  
 Greville, 173, 174  
 Grierson, [Sir] George, 4, 210-12, 405  
 Grierson, Mrs. [Lady], 210  
 Gul-badan, 351, 352, 356, 358, 375  
 Gupta, [Sir] K. G., 4, 38-9, 86, 88,  
     95, 103, 405-6  
 Gwalior, 353
- Halkett, Sir Arthur, 28  
 Halliday, F. M., 406  
 Hamburg, 15  
 Hard, 217  
 Hare, David, 175, 406  
 Harrison, Sir Henry, 307, 406  
 Harrison, Lucy, 80, 82  
 Harte, Bret, 101  
 Hastings, Warren, 52, 175, 290, 308,  
     340, 370  
 Health, of A. B. and H. B., 201-2  
 Heeley, Wilfred, 4, 38, 44, 45, 95, 96,  
     406  
 High Court, H. B. passed over for,  
     287-90, 315  
 Hill, Rowland, 115  
 Hindu Mahila Bidyalaya, 92, 28  
*History and Statistics of the District of*  
     *Bakarganj*, 43, 52 n., 54, 102,  
     131, 133, 136, 137, 371  
 "History of Bengal," 259, 343  
*History of the Emperor Akbar*, 239,  
     268, 282-3, 323  
*History of Henry Esmond*, 116-17  
 Home Rule, 284-5  
 Homer, 21, 305  
 Horace, 102, 344  
 Horses, 195  
 Household arrangements, 195-7  
 Howison, Eliza Christian, *see* Goldie,  
     Eliza C.  
 Howison, Jane, 17, 19-20, 29, 50, 51,  
     53, 131, 270, 396  
*How to Choose a Good Milk Cow*, 16  
 Hughes, Thomas, 82

# Index

- Humayun-Nama*, 351, 356  
 Hunt, Leigh, 173  
 Hunter, Sir William, 37 n., 334 n., 335, 390-1, 393-4, 406  
 Hurree, *see* Bisheshwar  
 Hutchinson, Colonel and Lady, 346  
 Hutton, R. H., 78  
 Hyderabad, 353  
 Hymns, H. B. on, 115  
  
 Ilbert Bill, 227-8, 234, 247, 250, 392-3  
 Ilfracombe, 323  
*Iliad*, 21  
*Imperial Gazetteer*, 16  
 India, British rule in, H. B. on, 43-4, 96-7, 175, 313-5, 383-4  
 India, disease in, 386  
 India, poverty in, 386  
 Indian Reform Association, 89  
 Indigo Planter case, 344  
 Inzievar, 11-12, 31, 32, 409  
 Irvine, 7  
  
 Jaipur, 357  
 Jalpaiguri case, 185-9, 272  
*John and Irene*, 350 n.  
 Johnston, 21  
 Joll, Mrs., 213, 214-15  
 Jones, Lewis Vence, 397  
 Jowitt, B., 352  
 "Joy," *see* Beveridge, Laetitia S.  
  
 Kaloo and Kanchi, 203  
 Kanchi, 318, 322, 328  
 Keavil, 236 ff.  
 Kedar Buz, 198  
 Kennedy, 190  
 Kensington, 366-7  
 Kerr, Seton, 137  
*Key to the Heart of Beginners*, 351  
*Khedive*, S. S., 257  
 Kinchinjunga, 180, 301  
 Kingsley, Charles, 124, 165, 178, 204  
 Kipling, Rudyard, 225, 336  
 Kuch Behar, 382; *see also* Cooch Behar  
 Kumad, 234, 236, 241, 279  
 Kumar, Nanda, 233, 290, 339  
  
 Lahore, 353  
 Lamb, Charles, 173  
 Lang, Andrew, 351  
  
 Laslett, 70  
 Lawrence, Sir John, 47, 175  
 Least Common Multiple, 286  
 Lecky, W. E. H., 165, 169, 171, 222  
 Lectures, H. B. on, 121, 307  
 Leeches, 201  
 Leeds, University of, 63  
 Legnownens, Anna, 85  
 Lessing, 47, 172  
 Lewin, Fanny, 241, 256, 266, 278, 285  
 Liberalism, W. Akroyd and, 69-70  
 Livesey, J. J., 156-7, 167, 170-1, 173, 176, 182, 406  
 Livy, 52  
 Lowndes, Marie Belloc, 87 n., 133 n.  
 Lucas, 316  
 Luttmann-Johnson, H., 337, 406  
 Lyttelton, 70  
  
 Macaulay [Lord], 43, 52, 342, 343, 363  
 MacDonnell, Sir Anthony P., 288, 406-7  
 Mackintosh, Sir James, 343, 346  
 Macrobie, 203  
 Madras famine, 156-7  
 Maine, Sir Henry, 304  
 Main, Elizabeth Christian, *see* Burn, Mrs. R. S.  
 Malvern, 241  
 Manipur, 38  
 Manning, Miss E. A., 248, 257, 407  
 Marcus Aurelius, 45, 103, 363, 373  
 Markby, Mr. Justice, 187-8  
 Marriage and celibacy, A. B. and H. B. on, 6, 222  
 Martin, 70  
 Martineau, Harriet, 189  
 Martineau, James, 250  
 Marvell, Andrew, 278  
 Mauricc, F. D., 82, 167  
 Meredith, George, 36, 315  
 Meres, W. F., 260, 407  
 Merimée, Prosper, 93  
 Michelet, 115  
 Middle Class, 377-9  
 Middleton, Dr., 36  
 Milk, 196-7  
 Mill, J. S., 3, 105-6, 112, 168, 309-10  
 Milton, 225  
*Misanthrope*, Le, 35  
 Missionaries, H. B. on, 44  
*Modern Utopia*, A, 76  
 Molière, 35  
 Monro, James, 360, 393, 407

## *India Called Them*

- Montesquieu, 45  
Moral standards, A. B. and H. B. on, 245-6  
Moses, 46  
Mosquitoes, 199  
Motoring, 365  
Mowatt, Fanny Louisa, 75, 77, 78, 82, 86, 87, 88, 90 *n.*, 93, 114, 119, 132, 139, 236, 239, 243, 255, 283-4, 323, 325, 350  
Mowatt, James, 87, 93, 108, 132, 139, 236, 239, 253, 283-5, 325, 347, 350  
Mowatt, Mrs., the elder, 236  
Murray, Miss, 278  
Murshudabad, 272, 337 *ff.*  
Mussoorie, 154, 197, 202, 217 *ff.*, 231-2  
Mymensing, 38
- Nadia, 38  
Napier of Magdala, Lord, 30  
Napoleon I, 4  
National League for Opposing Women's Suffrage, 351  
Newcome, Colonel, 14, 376-7  
New Lanark, 19-20  
Nil Kemal, 169, 174  
Noakhali, 38  
Noer, Countess, 239, 268, 282-3, 290-2, 375  
Noer, A. B.'s visit to, 291-2  
Norris, J. F., 259, 407  
North, Mr., 255  
North, Kate Lloyd, 76, 132, 212, 255, 266, 283, 353  
North, Oliver Danson, 398  
Northbrook, Lord, 134  
Novel, the, H. B. on, 143, 171  
Nulhatty State Railway, 337  
"Nunky," 32
- O'Brien, Dr., 163, 182, 256  
Ogbourne, 306  
Opium-eating, 203  
Orissa, 38  
Owen, Robert, 4, 19-20
- Palfrey Collections*, 397  
Palmer, Edward, 171  
*Pariah, The*, 346  
Parkes, Bessie Rayner, *see* Belloc, Bessie R. P.  
Parkes, Joseph, 87 *n.*
- Parkfield, 66  
Party, International, 209-12  
Pascal, 16  
Patnala, 353  
Patna, 191-2, 209, 264  
Pawsey, 262  
*Perfect Wagnerite, The*, 350  
Perks, Mary Anne, *see* Akroyd, Mary Anne  
Perneau, Colonel, 307  
Persel, Maxse, 335  
Persian, A. B. learns, 351  
Pests, 199 *ff.*  
Peter Lombard, 171  
Petrarch, 170  
Pfeiffer, Ida, 215  
Phallut, 319  
Phear, [Sir] J., 4, 91, 93, 101, 109, 127, 407  
Phear, Mrs. [Lady], 4, 74, 91, 111, 112, 113, 127, 128, 407  
Phojdar Ram, 198  
Pigs, jungly, 199  
Pitfold, 335, 350 *ff.*, 361, 367  
Place, Francis, 66, 73  
Plague, 357  
Plassey, 339  
Plutarch, 180  
Poor Law, W. Akroyd and, 67-8  
Poor Law Report (1834), 67  
Pratapaditya, 382  
Price, Stanley Beveridge, 397  
Princess Alice Hospital, 330-1  
Punnoo, 198
- Race questions, A. B. and, 166-7  
Railway, at Stourbridge, 71  
Rainy, 142  
Rajshahi, 337  
Ramage, Helen, *see* Dawson, Helen  
Ram Chunder, 171, 178  
Rampini, R. F., 315-6, 337, 407  
Ramyard, 158, 197, 198, 206-7, 278, 328, 334, 355, 359, 377  
Ranagath, 360  
Rangpur, 143 *ff.*, 160-92, 195, 209, 262  
Ranke, L. von, 190  
Reid, Mrs., 78-9, 80-1, 82, 86  
Reilly, 56  
Religion, A. B. and H. B. and, 6, 44 *ff.*, 134-5, 220, 309-11, 341  
Ridsdale, 176, 191, 204  
Ringwood, 167, 185  
Ripon, Marquess of, 249, 392, 393, 408

## Index

- Ritchie, Gerald, 260 n., 372, 394 n.  
 Robertson, F. W., 140, 221, 312  
 Robertson, Mrs. Major, 21  
 Robson, 214-15  
*Roderick Random*, 11  
 Rohilkund, 354  
*Romola*, 251  
 Rousseau, J. J., 6, 246, 308, 370  
 Roy, Ram Mohan, 83, 99, 408  
 Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 290,  
     323, 334, 351  
 Rubattino Line, 239, 254, 294  
 Rupee, fall of, 150-1, 282, 335, 338  
 Russell, Lady Rachel, 219  
  
 St. Moritz, 136 ff.  
 St. Mungo's, 234 ff., 409  
 Sala, George Augustus, 278  
 Sale, Mr. and Mrs., 60  
 Samuells, 306  
 Sarna, Dr., 91  
*Saturday Review*, 137-9  
 Savonarola, 90  
 Schiller, 123  
 Schopenhauer, 157  
 Schuch, Fr., 300, 301, 302  
 Scorpions, 200  
*Scot in London, The*, 27  
 Sen, Keshub Chunder, 83-6, 89-91,  
     98, 99-101, 408  
 Sen, Mrs., 89  
 Senchal, 301  
 Seneca, 175, 180  
 Sepoy Mutiny, 35  
 Servants, 195 ff., 202-7, 268-9, 339;  
     *see also* Insert facing p. 182  
 Sex relations, 245-7  
 Seyton, Catherine, 118  
 Shakespeare, 47, 124  
 Shaw, G. Bernard, 4-5, 350  
 Shaw, Mrs. Bernard, 350  
*Sheepfold and the Common, The*, 25  
 Shelley, 3, 39, 87, 106, 175  
 Shelley, Mrs., 397  
 Sherer, Mrs., 187  
 Shillong, 160, 191  
 Shirreff family, 11  
 Sixtus V, Pope, 190  
 Slums, 354  
 Smith, Sydney, 173, 314  
 Smoking, 146, 250, 353  
 Smollett, T., 11  
 Snakes, 199-200  
 Socrates, 3, 307  
 Sonthils, 340-1  
  
 Sophocles, 93  
 Southey, 342  
 Stanley, Dean, 177, 242  
 Stations, changing, 197-8  
 Stephen, Sir J. F., 290  
 Sterling, John, 123  
 Stigand *major*, 329  
 Stoics, 45, 175, 220  
 Stourbridge, 63 ff.  
 Stourbridge Board of Guardians, 67-9  
 Stowe, Mrs., 53  
 Stratford, 241  
 Stuart, Mrs., 104, 113, 115, 117  
 Such, Theophrastus, 174, 175, 177  
 Suez Canal, 87  
 Sullivan, E. J., 76  
 Sunday, A. B. on, 23-4  
 Surnamoye, Maharani, 91, 337, 403  
 Swanwick, Anna, 83  
 Swift, 23, 165, 170, 180, 363  
 Swinburne, A. C., 363  
 Sylhet, 38  
  
*Tait's Magazine*, 21  
 Taj Mahal, 357  
*Tale of a Tub, The*, 170  
 Tawney, Mrs. R. H., *see* Beveridge,  
     Annette Jeanie  
 Taylor, Mrs., 3, 105-7, 310  
 Telescope, 9  
 Tennyson, 107, 122, 142, 170, 177,  
     352, 362  
 Thackeray, Miss, 305  
 Thackeray, W. M., 116, 137-8, 177,  
     371-2, 375, 376  
*Theological Review*, 44, 49  
 Thomas à Kempis, 42  
 Thompson, Sir A. Rivers, 228, 249,  
     287, 392, 408  
 Thomson, Margaret, *see* Beveridge,  
     Margaret  
*Times, The*, 43  
 Tivoli Gardens, 200-1  
 Todd, Christian, 21  
 Tolstoi, 336  
 Tomes (Dentist), 281  
 "Tools of My Trade," 150, 195  
 Toomey, Mrs., 154, 163, 169  
 Toothache, H. B. on, 307  
 Townsend, Miss Payne, *see* Shaw,  
     Mrs. Bernard  
 Toynbee Hall, 362  
*Trial of Nanda Kumar*, 233, 290  
 Tristan d'Acunha, 37  
 Trollope, A., 37, 93, 164, 375

## *India Called Them*

- Troopers, lying by, 176  
 Trustees, 253  
 Tuggal Hall, 335  
 Tunnykhan, 198  
 Turki, A. B. learns, 351  
 Turner, Henry and Alice, 236, 241, 278, 283  
 "Tutu," see Beveridge, Annette Jeanie  
 Typewriter, H. B. and, 293
- Udaipur, 356  
 Ula, Jabar, case of, 98-9  
 Umarkot, 353, 358  
 Underground, the London, 234-5  
 Unitarians, and Indian religious reformers, 83
- Vicar of Wakefield*, 13  
 Victoria, Queen, 12  
*Villette*, 166  
 Virgil, 22, 102, 178, 285, 314, 362  
 Vogel, Emma, 213, 236-7, 241, 256, 268, 278, 279, 285-6, 292, 302-3, 308, 323, 324
- Wages, servants', 198  
 Walford, Henry, 398  
 Walford, Joseph, 378  
 Walford, Sarah, see Akroyd, Sarah  
 Walks, long, 22, 24  
 Wallington, Miss, 83  
 War, W. Akroyd and, 71
- Ward, Sir W. E., 174, 408  
 Ward, Mrs., 171, 173  
 Watkins, Jeanie, see Howison, Mrs.  
 Watson, 175  
 Watt, Alexander, 11, 378  
 Watt, Jane, 11, 12, 14-15, 23, 31-2, 35, 49, 119  
 Watt, Jemima, see Beveridge, Jemima  
 Webb, Beatrice, 351  
 Wells, H. G., 76  
 Welsh, Katherine, 171  
 Whately, Abp., 39, 346  
 Will, W. Akroyd's, 77  
 Williamson, Capt., 163-4  
 Williamson, Sir Walter J. F., 305, 306, 408  
 Wilson, Jenny, 32  
 Wilson, Lady, 321  
 Wingate, 336  
 Woakes (Aurist), 246, 252-3, 281, 282, 287, 288, 293  
 Wooley, 265  
 Worcestershire (East) Elections, 70  
 Wordsworth, W., 3, 117, 118, 171, 306, 363  
 Working Men's College, 82  
 Working Women's College, 82, 86, 87, 93
- Xanthos*, S. S., 87
- Yonge, Charlotte, 115  
 York, 63, 283

